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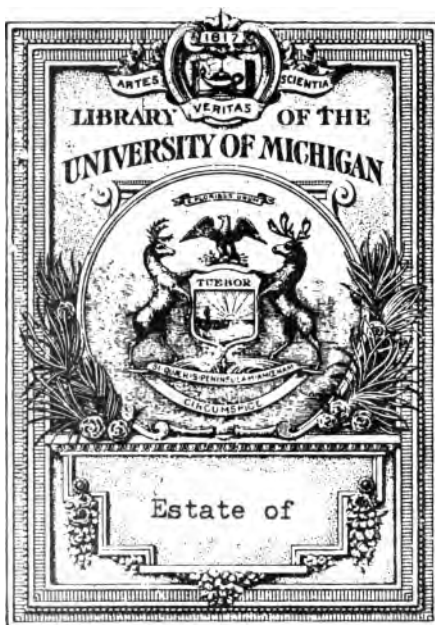
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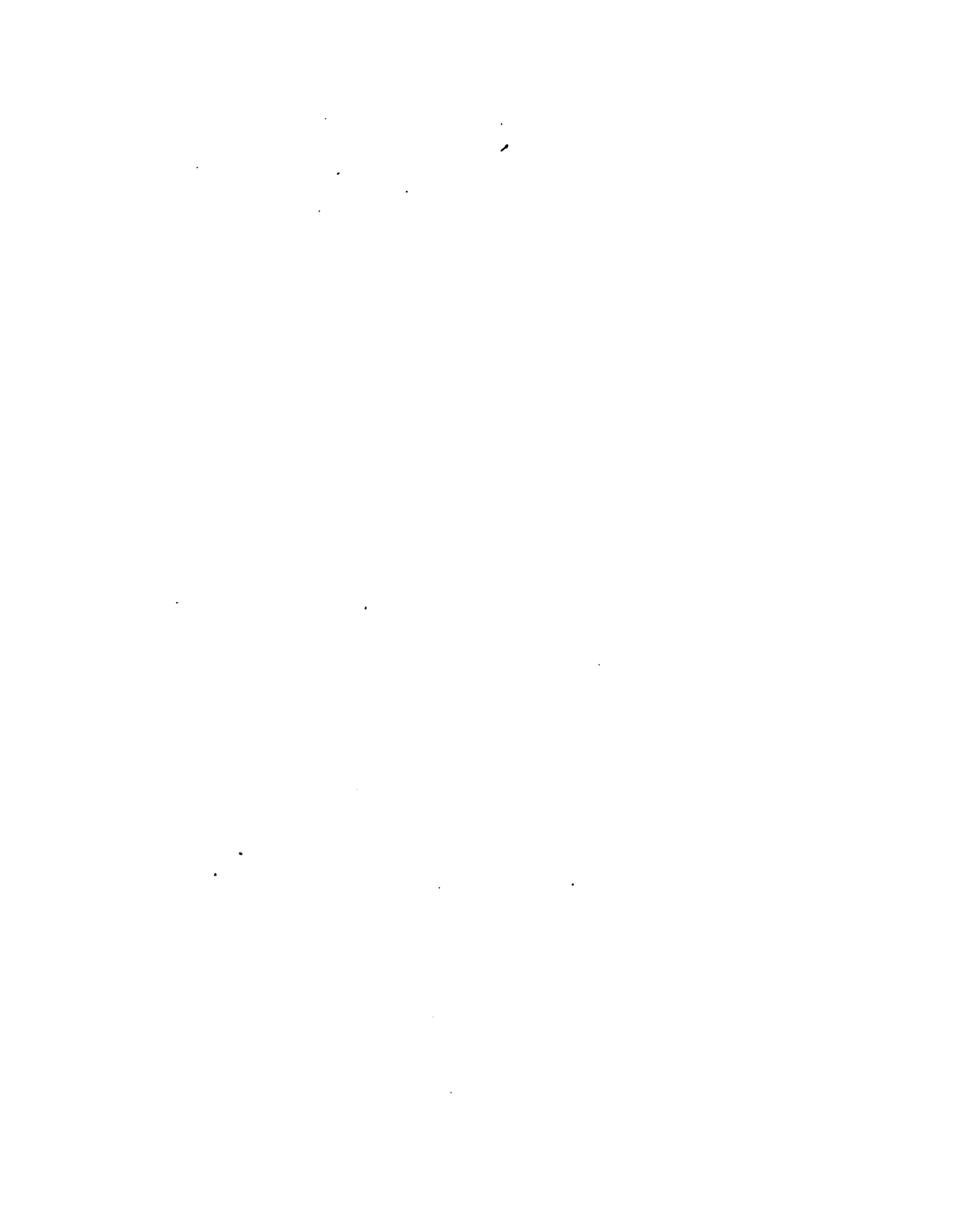
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A BRIEF HISTORY  
OF  
THE GLASGOW STAGE.









*Photography by Annan & Sons, Glasgow*

THEATRE ROYAL, DUNLOP STREET.

THE  
GLASGOW STAGE.

BY  
WALTER BAYNHAM.

Glasgow:  
ROBERT FORRESTER,  
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## DEDICATION.



MY DEAR IRVING,

The fact that in your early life you were so pleasantly prominent as an actor in Dunlop Street, not unnaturally suggests a wish on my part, to be privileged to dedicate this little work to you. Yet, I am prompted also by other motives equally strong: the desire to record the pride I feel in the honour of your friendship, the esteem in which you are so justly held by all interested in the drama, and your life's devotion to the cause of histrionic art.

Very affectionately yours,

WALTER BAYNHAM.

To HENRY IRVING, ESQ.



## PREFACE.

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WHEN I first took up the subject of Glasgow theatricals, I resolved to call it "Days of Dunlop Street." The intention was simply to compress into a few chapters, some personal recollections of certain facts, anecdotes, and individuals which connected themselves with my memory during the very few years I was associated with the Glasgow stage. Reflecting, however, on the title I had chosen, I found it needful to say something about the origin of the theatre itself; how it came to be built at all, and why, of all places in the city, in Dunlop Street. So it occurred to me that it might be interesting to the public to ascertain something not only about the origin and history of the Theatre Royal, Dunlop Street, but likewise about theatres and players so far as they related in any way to Glasgow. So these papers have taken the form of what, I believe, has never been published before—*A Brief History of the Glasgow Stage.*

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1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

2. Once the problem is identified, the next step is to define the objectives and goals of the project. This helps to clarify what needs to be achieved and provides a clear direction for the team.

3. The third step is to develop a plan or strategy to address the problem. This involves breaking down the problem into smaller, manageable tasks and determining the resources needed to complete them.

4. The fourth step is to implement the plan. This involves putting the strategy into action and monitoring progress regularly to ensure that the project is on track.

5. Finally, the fifth step is to evaluate the results of the project. This involves assessing the outcomes against the objectives and goals to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

# THE GLASGOW STAGE.

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## CHAPTER I.

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THEATRICAL representations in Glasgow, as everywhere else, owed their origin to the Church. The subjects of the first plays in Scotland, as in England, were Scriptural; the Clergy were the dramatists, the Church was the stage, and Sunday was the play-day. Prior to and for some time after the Reformation, pantomimic representations of the history of our Saviour, His Passion, and His Miracles, were exhibited in Glasgow. In the sixteenth century the number of playhouses was so great that they were complained of as a nuisance, not only in Edinburgh but throughout the kingdom. Profane, and even indecent, subjects gradually crept in; and the members of the Church who had hitherto been foremost in supporting them now became foremost in trying to suppress them. Plays on sacred subjects were prohibited. All kinds of performances on Sundays were denounced. Every man, woman, and child

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who attended any entertainment on that day was excommunicated without the benefit of clergy. In the suppression of these theatrical exhibitions, the Church of Scotland took the lead, and in after times, when dramatic entertainments were attempted to be revived, we find, according to an old Scottish historian, the opposition to them was but more forcibly renewed.

On the 24th April, 1595, the Kirk-Session of Glasgow directed the town's drummer to forbid "all persons from going to Ruglen to see vain plays on Sundays." On the 20th May, 1624, the session gave public intimation that all "resetters of comedians would be severely punished." And on the 20th July, 1670, the Magistrates of Glasgow "interdicted strolling stage players from running through the streets, and from performing plays in private houses," which they called "The Wisdom of Solomon." "The Presbytery," writes Mr. Arnot in his interesting book, "were possessed with the most violent and the most illiberal animosity against the stage. The writings of their most popular divines represented the playhouse as the actual temple of the Devil, where he frequently appeared clothed in a corporeal substance and possessed the spectators, whom he held as his worshippers."

In theological Scotland, where belief in demonology and witchcraft was so slow in dying, such stories were currently believed. The rage against the "Temple of Beelzebub," as the theatrical entertainments were styled at that period, was stronger by far north of the Tweed than in England, and the

drama consequently made far slower progress in North Britain than it did elsewhere. But, as in every case of intolerance and persecution, with each new assault upon the helpless, the vanquisher was opening the road to his own defeat. The virulence of the clergy aroused an antagonistic feeling in a certain class of the laity, and a strong party rose in rebellion against priestly tyranny and oppression. Parties were formed who nightly patronised entertainments in order to vindicate the right of public opinion, and at the same time to protect the actors themselves from personal violence, with which they were threatened.

Scottish actors at that period, in order to defend themselves from the violent measures adopted against them, were obliged to register themselves not as actors but as menial servants to some of their noble patrons. It was not an uncommon thing for a tragedian at this period to be received into a nobleman's house as his butler, and after playing Richard the Third upon the stage, to act the part of "Scrub" off it, by drawing a cork at his lordship's side table. No man of repute at that period would aid either by his name or his purse in the erection of a playhouse. No builder would build a theatre, nor could he, if so inclined, have found workmen to carry on the work. Even the accommodation of a roof was looked upon by the wary landlord as too great a hazard; for the owner was assured by his zealous pastors that the devil would be personified beneath it, and that the whole fabric would vanish away in a flame of fire.



No city was at the time more imbued with religious fanaticism than Glasgow, and no wonder! Many of its best citizens had risked not only their fortunes but their very lives in support of Presbyterianism against Popery, and this, long before the days of William of Orange or even those of the first Charles. All art, grace, harmony, and truth to nature displayed by a Phidias or a Raphael; the love of the ideal, the power alike of painter, poet, author, or actor, were lost in the one hard sense of what was regarded as sensuous. Being sensuous, it was pronounced Popish, and opposed to pure spiritual religion. Anything which tended to please the eye, charm the ear, or steal upon the senses, was looked on as in some way related to Romanism. Thus all plays were abandoned. The beams of that brighter sun which shone on England with the accession of William of Orange did not for years pierce the darkness and gloom which an austere theology had cast over Scotland. In the era of Lillo, William Congreve, and Farquhar, the drama was not known north of the Tweed; and it was not until after the Union in 1707 that any player could obtain a hearing in Scotland.

What theatrical (?) entertainments had been given in Scotland up to that period had partaken more of the style of our present "Variety" stage. The company had consisted solely of bands of strolling players, tumblers, acrobats, singers, dancers, and performers on the tight rope. The chosen haunt in Glasgow for such performances up to 1750 was "Burrell's Close." This was a passage which led out eastward from Duke Street, and at the end of

which was a public hall accessible by a narrow staircase.

Mr. Daniel Burrell, the proprietor of this hall, was a dancing master who had in 1738 been invited by the civic authorities to come and teach "the poetry of motion" in Glasgow. The art had been imported from London by the upper classes, the Duchess of Gordon having been the chief patroness. But Mr. Burrell had not driven a thriving trade. He required the aid and guarantee of the Corporation in the shape of an annual salary of £20 to enable him to carry on his profession. His fees were comparatively moderate, 25s. being the sessional one for seven months, 5s. for a Ball, and 1s. for practising for it under his supervision.

Some idea of the rigidity and gloom which were the outcome of the first teachings of the Reformers may be gleaned from the fact that at the close of the seventeenth century Dancing was allowed to be taught only under the following restrictions:—

*(From a Minute of the Corporation, 11th November, 1699.)*

"The quhilk day the Magistrates and Towne Council, upon a supplication given *in re* John Smith, Dancing Master, allow and permitt the said John to teach dancing within the burgh, with and under the provisions and conditions under written, viz.:— That he shall behave himself soberly, teach at seasonable hours, keep no balls, and that he shall so order his teaching that there shall be noe *promiscuous*

*dancing of young men and young women together; but that each sex shall be taught by themselves, and that one sex shall be dismissed and be out of his house before the other enter therein."*

For a long time after this, no one was allowed to teach dancing without a license. "Native talent," writes Mr. Strang, of a later date (1759), in his "Glasgow and its Clubs," "seems to have been so scarce that the Corporation was obliged, for the better education of the citizens, to bribe parties from a distance to settle in the City." Hence Mr. Daniel Burrell's annual stipend of £20 from the Corporation. Here in Burrell's Close was given, on the 30th September, 1751, one of the many of this class of performance. The following extract is interesting:—

"Being," says the *Glasgow Courant* of that date, "positively the last night of our performance in this City. For the Benefit of Mr. Dominique. At Mr. Burrell's Hall, above the Cross, this present Monday, being the 30th September, will be performed a Concert of Vocal and Instrumental Music. Boxes and Pit, Two Shillings; Gallery, One Shilling. Between the two Parts of the Concert will be given (gratis) Rope-Dancing and Tumbling. Particularly, Mrs. Gorman will jump over the Garter forward and backward on the Stiff Rope, such as was never done in this City before. Likewise, Walking on the Small Slack Wire, by the famous Russian Boy. Dancing, both Serious and Comic, by Mons. and Madam Granier. Likewise, a new Humorous Dance called the Soldier and the Sailor, the Tinkler and Taylor, and Bixome Joan of Deptford. To the great sur-

prise of the spectators Mr. Dominique will fly over the Double Fountain. To conclude with a Pantomime Entertainment called Harlequin Captive, or the Dutchman Bitt. The Doors to be opened at five, and to begin exactly at six."

The first edifice erected for regular theatrical representations was a wooden booth. This was built in 1752 against an old wall of the Bishop's Palace, in an area called the Castle Yard, which adjoined the Cathedral. This wall hung for a long time over Kirk Street, and overhung it to such an extent that a certain Mr. Coulter could never be advised to go near it. He avoided it from a firm belief in a legend "that whenever the *wisest man* in the city came in contact with it it would fall and smother him."

In this little building, little better than, if so good as, some of our modern "shows," some of the best actors and actresses of their day played to most fashionable audiences. The nobler of their patrons were carried to the theatre in their sedan chairs, which were guarded to protect them from insult at the hands of religious zealots who gathered round, menacing all who entered "the Devil's Home." Amongst the artists we find the names of such as Mrs. Ward, Messrs. Love, Stamper, and last, but not least, West Digges, whose real name was West. He was supposed to be the natural son of a nobleman, and his first appearance in society created, as it did on the stage, no small sensation.

This wooden building had not existed long when the religious community were gladdened by the news

that the greatest clerical luminary of the day was shortly coming to Glasgow—Whitefield!

George Whitefield had himself as a boy been no contemptible actor—a fact which he wished in his journal to have been enabled to record in “tears of blood.” His abuse of all stage exhibitions was frequently followed by violence. His followers would frequently sweep down on country fairs, take forcible possession of the booths, and drive out the poor, unoffending strollers, leaving them to starve, slave, or die as outcasts. Whitefield came to Glasgow, and Glasgow welcomed the most famous preacher of his day with open arms. Our modern revivals and revivalists sink into insignificance when we read of this man’s eloquence and its effects. Fancy him, then, standing amongst the graves in the churchyard against the Cathedral. Look at the man! Picture him! One something above the middle stature, well-proportioned, slender and graceful, fair complexioned, with regular features, small lively blue eyes. But what a voice!—unrivalled in power, melody, and compass! Let the imagination paint such a man denouncing the Playhouse in language and gesture as forcible as that with which a short time before he had looked up, and, with uplifted hands, invoked the great Archangel—“Stop, Gabriel! Stop, Gabriel! stop, ere you enter the sacred portals, and yet carry with you the news of one sinner converted to God!” See if you can, with the mind’s eye, that man pointing to this wooden theatre as the abode of Satan. Who could be surprised at the result? What wonder if a parcel of ignorant zealots, inflamed to a pitch of religious

frenzy by the eloquence of their leader, should sweep down as they did upon the poor, miserable apology for a playhouse, and completely wreck it, or that the affrighted actors and actresses fled the town in order to save their very lives! So the first Glasgow Playhouse came to an end.





CHAPTER II.

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FOR twelve years after the demolition of the wooden building in Castle Yard, no vestige is to be found in any chronicle of anything bordering on dramatic entertainments in Glasgow. The theatre was regarded as the pavilion of Satan, and had the religion been Catholic instead of Presbyterian, most of the "gude" people would have crossed themselves at its very name. As the domicile of the Prince of Darkness, it was regarded even as recently as 1861 as an infernal abode. During that year (the one in which I first appeared as an actor in Glasgow) I strolled on one Sunday evening into the Trades' Hall in Glassford Street. It was during the "Hammond" revivals. The boy evangelist who was holding forth, caught sight of me. With one hand he slapped his open Bible vigorously, exclaiming, "Here, here is Heaven," and with his other hand he pointed at me, crying immediately afterwards, "The pit of the Theatre Royal is HELL."

It was in 1752 that the Castle Yard wooden building was demolished. For twelve years afterwards, as I have stated, no actor or manager was found bold enough to venture into Glasgow. At Edinburgh, however, a regular theatre had been erected, and its stage had been illumined by some of the brightest stars then in the dramatic firmament.

Amongst these, none shone with greater lustre than the celebrated Mrs. Bellamy.

She was destined to be the first actress who was to play in the first regular theatre in Glasgow. Her fame had preceded her to Scotland as much from certain gossip as on account of her beauty and talent. She was the only successful rival of Peg Woffington, "who loved her *accordingly*." When Dryden's tragedy of the "Rival Queens" was produced, "Roxana" had been played by Peg, and "Statira" by Mrs. Bellamy. The latter had ordered two gorgeous dresses direct from Paris. At sight of her rival in all her resplendent glories of Parisian costume, Peg's jealousy had been aroused beyond control, and raising a real dagger "Roxana" had tried to stab her fair rival as she drove her from the stage. "Alexander," writes Dr. Doran, "and a posse of chiefs with hard names were at hand, but the less brilliantly-clad 'Roxana' rolled 'Statira' and her spangled 'sack' in the dust, pommelling her with her dagger, and screaming aloud at every blow—

"Nor he nor Heaven shall shield thee from my justice.

"DIE, Sorceress!! and—(*pommel*)—all—my—(*pommel*)—wrongs—(*pommel*)—die—(*double pommel*)—with thee."

Mrs. Bellamy had been playing, too, one night "Alicia," in "Jane Shore," at Covent Garden. The King of Denmark, who was then on a visit to George the Third, was present, but, suffering from the plethora of a heavy dinner, he fell fast asleep during one of the actress's finest scenes. In her character of "Alicia" she had to exclaim, "Oh, thou false love!" Availing

herself of the opportunity which the proximity of the Danish monarch in a stage-box presented, she shouted the words "Oh, THOU false love" close into the sleeping monarch's ears. After a stare of blank astonishment he turned to the King and said audibly—"By G——, I vood not marry dat voman vere dere none oder on earth."

"The morning of my benefit in Edinburgh," writes Mrs. Bellamy, "I was arrested by the creditor who had been the occasion of my indiscreet flight from London. I was, however, soon set at liberty, the caption being against the laws of Scotland, which allow some days' notice before they can be taken. Upon this occasion the first lawyers in the city were volunteers in my case, particularly Mr. Montgomerie, afterwards Chief Baron and Dean of the Faculty."

Who wouldn't have taken up her cause! Who could be cross with poor, pretty, blue-eyed, frail Mrs. Bellamy? She so softened the heart of her lawyer that he introduced his dazzling innamorata, sans ceremony, at once into the bosom of his family.

"I remember her finding fault with my approaching too near her in the balcony scene in 'Romeo and Juliet,'" writes an Edinburgh actor of that period. "I apologised by observing that it was impossible to refrain from even scaling the wall, if accessible, when so charming an object was in view."

So spoke Mr. Jackson, and so seemed to think five at least of some Glasgow gentlemen who made part of the audience that night. These five good Glasgow citizens succeeded in getting an introduction to the lady. They promised that they would build her a theatre if she would but promise them to visit their

city. Mr. John Jackson, accompanied by two Edinburgh managers—Messrs. Love and Beatt—took them at their word. Jackson set out from Edinburgh one wintry day—caped, cocked-hatted, and booted—to ride on horseback to Glasgow to ask permission of the Council to build a regular theatre in the city.

Conveyances then were scarce in the city, which, so far as traffic was concerned, was as dull as a dry ditch. Carts, the number of which Mr. Jackson might have told on his fingers, then dragged their lazy course up and down the streets by day, and were left to anybody's mercy in the streets at night. As for the public roads, they were more like country lanes than thoroughfares. It was just eight years before Mr. Jackson determined to apply for the license, that the first stage coach had been started to run between Glasgow and Edinburgh. It accommodated but six passengers; was drawn by six horses, started twice a week in the summer, and once in the winter. It left the George Inn, above the College, at nine o'clock in the morning, got to Livingstone the same night, and set its weary freight down in Edinburgh the following day, leaving that city again for Glasgow the same afternoon. But nineteen years prior to this, post-chaises and hackney coaches were unknown to Glasgow. There were three or four sedan chairs, but these, as Dr. Carlyle writes, were kept for carrying midwives about in the night, and old ladies to church, or young ones to the dancing assemblies, once a fortnight.

The names of the five gentlemen who had guaranteed to build the theatre were Mr. W. M'Dowall, of Castlesempie; William Bogle, of Hamilton Farm;

John Baird, of Craigton; Robert Bogle, of Shettleston; and James Dunlop, of Garnkirk, all members of the best social clubs of the day. Of the traits of two of these gentlemen we may glean something from a humorous ditty. It was written on the various members of the Hodge Podge Club, which held a convival meeting every fortnight, under the roof of a tavern kept by a Mr. Cruikshank. Of this club Mr. Dunlop and Mr. Baird were for some years members :—

With feelings too keen to be ever at ease,  
A lover of satire, but afraid to displease;  
When applauded a wit, but when censured a dunce—  
Retort on Dunlop, and you gag him at once.

Does a merchant, a squire, or a soldier come next?  
Or a medley of all these three characters mixed?  
No better companion than Baird have I known,  
When he apes no man's manners, but sticks to his own.

The prejudice then existing against the Drama had only grown more rampant than it was ten years before. Not a single individual who had ground within the burgh would sell these gentlemen a site for a theatre. Could a seller have been found, there would have been no small difficulty in securing builders. The majority of the labouring classes were led to believe that the building, being the Devil's House, would in all probability be very soon tenanted, even in its unfinished state, by his Satanic Majesty, who would remove it in person to his own peculiar realm, and carry all the workmen with it. The guarantors were obliged in consequence to go in search of a site beyond the burgh. It was about this time that Mr. John Miller, of Westerton, was advertising in the

Glasgow journals :—"A new street to be opened from Argyle Street to Candleriggs Loan. Whoever wants to purchase steadings in said street may apply to John Miller, maltman, in Glasgow, who will show the terms and agree to plans."

As neither the magistrates nor any private proprietor would sell, feu, or lease grounds for a theatre on any terms within the whole city, the projectors were obliged to erect it beyond the burgh, out at Grahamstown, near where Hope Street now joins Argyle Street. "What's the figure?" asked the committee. The pious maltman stroked his chin, and, after mature deliberation, replied—"Five shillings per square yard." "But the price is most exorbitant and extraordinary," they expostulated. "Aye, but ye'll see," replied Mr. Miller, "as it is intended for a Temple of Belial I'll expect an exorbitant and extraordinary sum for the purchase." The sum was agreed to.

The theatre was erected in Grahamstown. The spring of 1764 saw the announcement that it would shortly be opened by Messrs. Beatt and Love. Negotiations were at once entered into with the Edinburgh company. The date of the opening was fixed. The fascinating Mrs. Bellamy—"George Ann Bellamy"—so she signed herself, was engaged to act on the opening night.

Those twelve years which had passed since the mob had torn down the shed in Castle Yard had not sufficed to extinguish the almost universal and violent prejudice which existed amongst the clergy and the middle class against the Plays and Players.

That convulsory movement known as Revivalism was a century ago signalised by a fanaticism more wild than was ever known before or since in our city. Under the influence of out-door preaching at this time a Glasgow mob could be inflamed with the same zeal as that which needed but the fire of Whitefield to arouse it twelve years before. The unrivalled eloquence of the latter had never been utterly quenched in those who had heard him. It needed but a spark now to kindle old animosities to a blaze. On the evening before that on which the first regular theatre ever seen in Glasgow was to open, a crowd had assembled round a fanatical Methodist preacher. Shouts, groans, and cries, prayers and psalm-singing had rent the spring-tide air, then breathing over the popular promenade, which extended by the river-side from the Green to the village of Anderston. Not a few educated people were amid the crowd. They, too, drank in greedily the preacher's words. The preacher suddenly ceased. He pointed with his outstretched arm towards Alston Street, then continued :—"I dreamed last night I was in Hell, where a banquet was being held. All the devils in the pit were there, when Lucifer, their chief, gave them a toast. 'Here,' cried he, 'is to the health of John Miller of Westerton, who has sold his ground to build ME a HOUSE on.'" This was enough. Nothing more was needed—the flame burst forth. SATAN'S TEMPLE!! It must and should be destroyed at once.

With the rays of the setting sun (emblem of Divine Love and Mercy) upon their faces; with the joyous song of spring birds filling the evening air, the mob

formed into a solid body and advanced at quick pace on the newly-built theatre. They were led on by those who had successfully attacked the wooden edifice years before. The new theatre was set on fire. The stage properties and dresses were reduced to ashes.

Mrs. Bellamy, driving into Glasgow in a coach and four from Edinburgh, on the following day was met, when about two miles from the city, by an actor. He had an awestruck face. Mrs. Bellamy had had forebodings as to the result of her engagement in Glasgow from the first. She had started on her journey under circumstances anything but auspicious.

"When we were about to set off," writes the fair lady, "after having discharged my debts I found I had not sufficient to defray the expenses of my journey." One of her servants was despatched to a neighbouring tradesman, and at his shop she pawned, as the lady writes, "the silver repeater Mr. Digges had given me," and (she omitted to add) which Mr. Digges had, of course, never paid for. The servant of the embarrassed lady most unfortunately had been told to take the watch to any watchmaker's, and innocently took it to the man who kept the very shop at which Mr. Digges had purchased it. The watchmen were sent for, and the girl locked up in the Tolbooth pending examination as to how she procured the stolen property. But the entreaties of the fair Bellamy again succeeded. The heart of the civic functionary was touched. The servant was released, and Mrs. Bellamy procured money enough for her start. She set off in "the chaise" which was in waiting to carry her to Glasgow. Twenty-four hours more and the actress looked on the



delightful city's fine streets, which fifty years before, Defoe had described "as the fairest for breadth and finest built, ever seen in one city together."

The actor's face was the "prologue to a tragic volume."

"Madam," he exclaimed, "you are ruined. You have nothing left but what you have in the chaise."

"What d'ye mean?" cried the affrighted actress.

"The stage of the new theatre," answered the actor, "was set on fire last night, and every vestige of scenery, as well as your dresses, consumed by the flames."

The lady was at least as courageous as she was extravagant. Many a woman would have first fainted, and then got back again to the place she came from, as fast as a post chaise with four horses could have carried her; but Mrs. Bellamy, who had snapt her fingers in the face of the foreign potentate at Covent Garden, was not the lady to show the white feather to a fanatical crowd. She looked her foes in the face. She determined to defeat their end. She would play that night, notwithstanding the stage had been burnt and her wardrobe with it. She sent at once for Bates, the stage manager, and told him to announce at the Exchange—the Cross at the Trongate, which served the purpose at that date—"Mrs. Bellamy will appear and act at the theatre to-night." Carpenters, joiners, upholsterers, were summoned. The actors were recalled to rehearsals at the Black Bull Inn, where she stayed. Arrangements for the repairing of the theatre, to be ready for that night, were set on foot. The nerve of the woman turned the tide of public feeling in her favour. She was pressed for cash.

Merchants on her bare security offered to lend her any amount she required. Even the *elite* of the fair sex became her champions. Not only did they place their wardrobes at the lady's disposal, but they flocked in crowds to the theatre. There, with a rapidly knocked-up stage, no scenery, heterogeneous costumes, imperfect lights, and a singed auditorium, did the corps dramatique assemble. A large room at the Black Bull Inn—which hostelry, in Argyle Street, had been erected by gentlemen of the hunt—served Mrs. Bellamy as a dressing-room, and a sedan chair conveyed her to the theatre. She appeared that night in the comedy of the "Citizen" and the farce of the "Mock Doctor;" Reddish being the leading man, and Aicken—afterwards a well-known actor at Covent Garden—the comedian. When the curtain fell another demonstration took place on the part of the fair sex. Fears were entertained that a crowd of the actress's foes might wait for her and the rest of the members of the company coming out of the theatre, and take as a signal for her so doing the exit of the audience. One of the ladies present declared that none of the audience would stir till all the performers, and even the servants, were safely out of the theatre; and, writes Mrs. Bellamy, "the Town Guard were ordered to escort us back to the city."




CHAPTER III.

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FOR the kindness and hospitality she received, I believe that Mrs. Bellamy was most honestly grateful, and with reason. Setting conventionality at defiance; viewing in Mrs. Bellamy a helpless woman, ruined through the misdirected zeal of a fanatical mob; remembering only the talents of the actress rather than the scandal of her private life, the ladies of Glasgow had in an unprecedentedly generous way come to the aid of a defenceless, although fallen, sister. On the evening following the fire—that on which the theatre was opened—before six o'clock, Mrs. Bellamy had been equipped, through the liberality and thoughtfulness of her lady patronesses, with more than an entire wardrobe for Comedy. No less than forty dresses, all of the richest material, some quite new, had been placed at her disposal. Nor did the ladies confine themselves to outward garments only. She received presents of all kinds, and from every part of the adjacent country; together with invitations to parties for the whole time of her residence in the neighbourhood.

Who could wonder that Glasgow shone beautiful to the blue eyes of the fair little lady? "The beauty of the place and of the country around it," she writes, "are extremely captivating. The meadow extending from the Green to Anderston in particular is beyond description picturesque and charming. It reminds



everyone who has ever seen it of the beautiful village of Haarlem. On one side of the river you see bleaching greens where multitudes are engaged in the different vocations of the linen trade, some washing, others attending the coppers. On the other side, cattle are grazing in a most delightful pasture, which terminates in a landscape much beyond any description which it is in my power to give it."

The public soon craved for something more substantial than ephemeral farce. True to their nationality the Scotch patrons asked Manager Beatt to play the tragedies of "Macbeth" and "Douglas," Mr. Home's newly written tragedy being then all the rage. But "here was the rub!" The "Citizen" and the "Mock Doctor" were all very well. The costumes required for these pieces were modern. "But," writes Mrs. Bellamy, "'Macbeth' and 'Douglas' could not be performed till cloaths proper for appearing in them were made and brought from Edinburgh." To play Lady Macbeth, black velvet was at that period deemed indispensable. "As," continues Mrs. B., "I had no black vestment of any kind sent to me amongst the numerous ones of different colours, I made that an objection to playing Lady Macbeth, upon which I was assured by one of the inhabitants that '*her ladyship's ghost walked every night at the Castle of Dunsinane dressed in white satin.*' So in white satin Lady Macbeth was played."

Poor soul! But a few years, and the scene had changed! The charms of the once famous Bellamy were gone; her beauty faded. The soul-entrancing voice had dwindled into a feeble treble; the bounding

step now tottered. All gone! "quite chapfallen!" Kind, charitable, generous to a fault, but a few years after her *début* in Glasgow, at the comparatively early age of fifty-six, this once goddess of Grace, Mirth, and Beauty, sits in an arm chair on the stage at Covent Garden taking her final farewell of the public she so loved and who had so loved her. The greatest actors and actresses of her day surround the poor, frail creature, prematurely old, worn, and sickly. The curtain is drawn up. A crowded audience rises to its willing feet to greet its former favourite with cheers. A poor, tottering, careworn woman, looking the more ghastly through her paint, tries to rise from the chair which is placed in the centre of the stage, to which she had been carried. She stumbles and falls back. One more trial! She totters forward. The once melodious tones, now so thin and faint, are heard to murmur something about "gratitude," "past favours." Then the shadowy form totters again, falls back sobbing into her chair, and the curtain falls.

To return to the opening night in Glasgow. The pieces were supported by Mr. Aicken and Mr. Reddish. The latter actor married the mother of the statesman George Canning. He is described as possessing

A clumsy figure and a vulgar face,  
Devoid of spirit as of pleasing grace,  
Action unmeaning, often misapplied,  
Blest with no perfect attribute of pride.

Something akin to pathos is, however, connected with the end of his career. He had recently re-

covered from an illness, and was met on his way to the theatre. He presented a sad spectacle. He had the step of an idiot, his eye wandering, his whole countenance vacant. "Glad to see you're able to get to the theatre once more," faltered his friend. "Yes, sir," replied Reddish, "I shall astonish you." He kept his word. He was to play that night *Leonatus Posthumus*, but he laboured under a mania. He could not be persuaded to anything but that he was going to play "*Romeo*." Accordingly he kept repeating the words of the latter character the whole way to the theatre. He repeated them whilst dressing in his dressing-room, and then in the Green Room. At last he was fairly pushed on to the stage. His fellow-actors, half sympathising with him, half expecting some fun, all felt convinced he would begin with a speech of "*Romeo*." But the moment he came in sight of the audience his recollection returned, and he went through the first scene of "*Posthumus*" without interpolating or missing a single word; acting better than he had ever been known to act before. He came off the stage. They crowded round to offer him congratulations. His eye became dazed. The mania that he was to play "*Romeo*" again seized him, and the delusion continued till he again went on the stage. This was but the beginning of a sad end. After passing through many melancholy scenes—some shameful ones—his brain became permanently diseased. He was thrown upon the Actor's Fund for support, and lingered out the remnant of his wretched life as a maniac in York Asylum.

The first managers of the first regular theatre in Glasgow were Mr. Beatt, an Edinburgh manager, and Mr. Love, who was also the stage manager. Their reign, however, was but for four years, and it is recorded somewhat significantly that the *first responsible manager* afterwards, was a Mr. Williams. The latter brought with him a company of strolling players, and succeeded in keeping the theatre open for three successive seasons—from 1768 to the end of 1771. In 1772 Mr. Digges turns up once more. He had the year before signed a lease for the Edinburgh Theatre, which had been transferred to him from Foote, who had failed there. In Edinburgh, Digges had been lauded to the skies. The receipts on his opening night in that city amounted to £120, and "he was received," says the *Courant*, "not only with thundering plaudits, but with loud and repeated huzzas."

Of this latter gentleman I must say a few words. To the student of dramatic literature the name of West Digges is as familiar almost as that of Garrick or Kean. Digges had been in the army, and had quitted it for the stage. Easy, engaging in style, and splendidly dressed, he was said to be "a victorious rogue" with the fair sex wherever he went. It was this famous Digges who was the innocent cause of the riot when the good folks of Dublin tore up the seats and demolished the theatre, then under the management of Mr. Sheridan, because that gentleman declined to allow him to deliver a strongly-flavoured political speech when Mr. Digges was playing "Mahomet, the Imposter." He had all the requisites to form a great actor on the stage—and off it. He had every advan-

tage of art and nature, except, writes his biographer, "an harmonious voice." The latter, however, was not so harsh as to shut the ears of the fair sex against him, nor to prevent him from swindling confiding tradesmen.

The next manager was Mr. Ross, who assumed the reins in 1773. Of this gentleman a portrait is still extant. We see in it that he has a wide, sensual-looking mouth, and a round, comfortable body, prone so much to stoutness that we are not surprised to find that when he went to London he was described by Dibdin "as a voluptuous man and a great eater." Ross had not the perseverance to give the necessary attention to his profession, and thus he happened to be admirable or insufferable in proportion as he was more or less plethoric. Twenty years prior to his coming to Glasgow—at the age of forty-five—he had won his honours as a light comedian at Covent Garden. He was a successful petitioner in a law suit regarding his father's will. The old gentleman had bequeathed him "one shilling, to be paid Mr. Ross by his sister, to thereby put him in mind of the misfortune he (Ross) had to be born." The jury awarded him £6,000.

The Glasgow Theatre soon passed into the hands of Tate Wilkinson. With the actors of a past generation the name of Tate Wilkinson, of the York Circuit, was a household word. Mr. Charles Mathews, the father of the late unrivalled comedian, speaks of Wilkinson as a polished gentleman in private life and even as a manager. "His liberality," writes Mathews, "was conspicuous towards the whole of his company,



from the highest to the lowest ; in manner and conduct, he was a Chesterfield in all he said and did."


To Wilkinson, the stage is indebted for some of its most valued records of actors of the past. He knew human nature thoroughly, was an excellent manager, a sound actor, and contrived not only to keep afloat but to swim safely into harbour through currents which, in theatrical management, have drowned so many adventurers.

Tate Wilkinson's brief career as a Glasgow manager came to an end, and negotiations were soon pending with Messrs. Bland and Jackson to succeed him. Mr. Bland was related to the famous Mrs. Jordan, and was, so it is said, great-grandfather to the well-known Fanny Bland, who figured in Dunlop Street some thirty-one years ago. Bland had procured a lease of the house in Glasgow for the season of 1780. To the management of the theatre he was destined, however, never to succeed. Meeting with Mr. John Jackson in Edinburgh, Bland persuaded Jackson—then an actor in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh—to enter into partnership with him and a Mr. Mills in the management of the Glasgow Alston Street Theatre. The season was not to commence before May. In the meantime the dresses and properties were purchased. The three managers organised a company, and filled up the time till the date of the proposed opening at Dumfries. On the 3rd of May Jackson left Dumfries and travelled to Glasgow to superintend the necessary arrangements for the opening night. As he approached Alston Street he saw a crowd gathered about the entrance to it.

Smoke was ascending into the clear morning air. His hopes sank ; with a quickened pulse he at once divined the cause. A glance told him all.

"When I arrived," he writes, "on the morning of the 5th May at the place where the theatre had stood I found it covered with a smoky ruin." For the moment the actor stood dazed. His little all had been invested in the wardrobe and in the properties which had been stored inside the building. Nearly all were destroyed. He had resigned his own engagement at Edinburgh, and was now comparatively penniless. Moreover, he had left behind him a company who were looking expectantly forward to him for salaries during the ensuing season.

The fire had broken out at one o'clock in the morning at the gallery end of the house. As to the cause, no one could determine it. There had been no play acted there, and consequently no fires for two days previous. Was the fire caused by accident, or was it, as it was generally thought at the time, from design? Popular prejudice was still strong against all plays and players. The theatre was burnt at a period when riot was rampant. But a few months before a mob had collected on Sunday during the time of divine service round a Popish chapel. They had pelted the congregation with stones, and destroyed every picture in the sacred edifice. In that same year—the year of the famous "Gordon Riots"—another outrage had been perpetrated by a fanatical mob. It had gutted the house of a potter in King Street, who happened to be a Roman Catholic. Dispersed for a short time by the arrival of the



military, the rioters gathered together again, and set fire to the potter's private dwelling-house. So faithful were the instigators of this riot to each other, that notwithstanding the next day the Magistrates offered by proclamation a reward of one hundred guineas for the apprehension of any *one* of the ringleaders, they all resisted the temptation, and none were ever secured. What hope was there, then, of tracing the perpetrators of an act which at that time was deemed honouring the cause of Christ? The theatre was yet, in the minds of nearly all the poorer classes, held in abhorrence, and this feeling seems to have been shared by the civic authorities. "I was present at the fire," writes Dr. Cleland in his famous "Census" book. "I heard the Magistrate direct the firemen to play on the adjoining houses and not to mind the Playhouse."

The building had been insured for £1,000, but the premium had by some neglect not been paid up. The Sun Fire Office, however, generously made a present of £300 towards the loss.

Soon after this catastrophe Mr. Jackson applied to the proprietors to know whether they intended to rebuild the theatre. They replied, "We have not the least intention of doing so; but you are at liberty to erect a house at your own risk, and if you choose to build on the same spot we will present you with the ground and the remaining walls." These walls, I may add in passing, were still standing fifty years ago, for the ruins had been fitted up, and were then used as the South-West Granary.

Alston Street, however, was, in the judgment of Jackson, too far removed from the city. His eye was

on St. Enoch's Croft, which was just then in the market. We know it now as Dunlop Street.

St. Enoch's Croft had been acquired ten years previously by Mr. Colin Dunlop, who was at the time Provost. The croft then faced the Clyde, and no prettier place was to be found near the city. On it were built several elegant mansions. A charming pleasure ground led down to the Green, and the croft extended from about the present Morison's Court westward, nearly to that ground on which Maxwell Street now stands. This was the fashionable promenade for the bucks, beaux, and belles—broad-skirted laced coats, periwigs, hoops, and furbelows. Among the first residents in Dunlop Street was Dr. Moore, father of the well-known hero of Corunna. Sir John Moore was born here. Almost immediately opposite Dr. Moore's mansion lived the well-known Rev. Mr. Porteous, of the Wynd Church, and Dr. John Gillies, of the South or College Church Parish, with whom John Wesley lodged during his preachings in Glasgow.

Mr. John Jackson applied to purchase the ground, and to build on it a theatre. There was not the same difficulty in getting ground for such a purpose as had occurred elsewhere. Mr. Dunlop had sold a large piece of ground on the east side to Mr. Robert Barclay, of Capelrigg, writer in Glasgow, and he, being superior to public prejudice, felt no qualms of conscience in redising of it to Mr. Jackson.

CHAPTER IV.

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BUT Jackson had not yet got out of troubled waters. No sooner was it noised abroad that a theatre was to be built within the city boundaries, than fanaticism was once more aroused. Towards the clergy Mr. Dunlop, it was deemed, had, in letting out his croft as a site whereon to build a Playhouse, committed a most serious offence. The reverend gentlemen who resided in St. Enoch's Croft at once took measures to prevent the building being erected. A clause in their feu from Mr. Dunlop stated "That it shall not be lawful to erect any tan work, candle work, soap work, nor any other work or manufacture upon any part of the grounds which may be deemed a nuisance by the Magistrates of Glasgow." On this, as they deemed, restrictive clause, they determined to oppose the erection of a playhouse.

Ignorant of the measures which were to be taken to frustrate the completion of his design, Mr. Jackson made arrangements for the commencement of the work. Plans were submitted; workmen engaged. It was decided that the foundation stone should be laid on Saturday, February 17, 1781, and by Jackson himself. As the future manager stood ready, trowel in hand, to proceed with the ceremony, a paper was handed him. He glanced at it and read as follows:—"Dr. Gillies and Mr. Porteous offer their compliments to Mr. Jackson, and think it their duty

candidly to inform him before he proceeds further in the work, they intend to join with other proprietors in Dunlop Street to apply to the magistrates to prevent the building of a Playhouse or Concert Hall for acting plays in this street, as being an injury to their property, and inconsistent with the conditions granted by Mr. Dunlop to the feuars. *We are to meet with them on Tuesday forenoon, and though we might have delayed giving any intimation till the building was begun, we thought it fair and becoming our station to give it thus early, 17th February, 1781.*"

But the zeal of these reverend gentlemen had out-run their discretion ; they had reckoned without their host. Jackson was not only an experienced manager and capital actor ; he was both a scholar and a gentleman. His father was a clergyman in the Church of England, and Jackson himself had mixed in the best society of the day. He possessed a wise head, which almost invariably prompted him to decisive action. In this case he deemed at first silence the better part of valour. He took no notice of the contents of the note, but quietly proceeded with the ceremony. He laid the stone, and ordered the work to be carried on with all speed. Returning to Edinburgh he consulted with his lawyers, and on their advice he posted to his reverend assailants a reply at once as pertinent as their own, and more grammatical. The following is an extract from it—  
"That your property should be injured by the building now erecting, I could in a moment have confuted, for 'where the carcase is there will the eagles be gathered

together ;' where amusements are held forth, there the body of the people will centre. . . . Your second assertion 'that it is inconsistent with the disposition granted by Mr. Dunlop to the feuars' is totally groundless. For, till you can prove that a Theatre is a Manufacture which may be deemed a nuisance you cannot seriously suppose the present building in dispute as coming within the meaning of Mr. Dunlop. A church, a school, or a ball-room, might, with equal propriety, be pronounced nuisances as the building in question. Let me persuade you, gentlemen, to take the advice of one who has seen enough of the world to point out your imprudent conduct on the occasion. Would you live in neighbourly comfort with one who has pitched his tent so near you? Molest him not in the pursuit of *his* profession, for believe him, he means to deport himself with the greatest deference to *yours*. The son of a clergyman, and brought up for holy orders, he will ever pay honour to the sacred characters of that order. Let it be your study to preach sanctity without austerity, for be assured, wherever compulsion or restraint accompanies admonition and advice, the senses take the alarm, and Nature and Reason, ever rebellious under restraint, begin to weigh and to confute the unreasonable dictates of authority. . . . I am ready on all occasions to meet you on the list of argument on this point, as I am in Parliament House before the Lords in Edinburgh, to whom I have already appealed on the subject of the other. On more maturely considering the subject, it appears clear to me that you do not know the plan of the

intended buildings. That which you complain of will neither interrupt your sight nor offend your hearing. A land is intended to be built along the front of Dunlop Street, according to the rules of that street, and likewise along Dr. Gillies' passage, as high as either of your houses. That next, Dr. Gillies will block up his prospect southwards within ten feet of his windows. This will entirely screen him not only from the sight of the theatre, but from every other object that way. These lands may be either heightened or lowered, placed forward or backward, according to the good or bad humour your conduct may occasion the proprietor. Since writing the above I have been reminded that one of you (Dr. Gillies) was last summer a fellow-traveller with me. We were then not disagreeable to each other. As we were fellow-travellers in that short journey, let us be so on a long one through the world, and let us show to each individual of that world, that brotherly love and charity are the characteristics of good Christians. That it may be so with me shall be the constant care of,

“Gentlemen, your humble servant,

“J. JACKSON.”


The letter had the desired effect. The work of building the theatre was completed in due time, and met with no further attempt at interruption on the part of clerical antagonists. Mr. Jackson and his reverend neighbours lived together in neighbourly peace, and the property in the vicinity rose in value. The theatre in Dunlop Street was in reality the first



theatre ever erected in Glasgow, the former one, having had its site in Grahamstown, had been built beyond the city boundaries. The cost of Dunlop Street Playhouse was upwards of £3000. It held at the then Edinburgh prices from £90 to £100. It stood upon the east side of Dunlop Street, and was enclosed by a wall five or six feet high. Its length extended about 90 feet, and its breadth about 45 feet. The pit door was in the centre of the west gable, and before it, was a piazza supported by Doric columns, which covered the entry which led to the galleries. It is said in a history of Glasgow, dated 1795, that "For either the external or interior appearance of the house little can be said, as with regard to both, they are very far from being elegant, either in design or execution." The date of its opening was in January, 1782. The performances were represented through the season by a detached company, which was occasionally recruited from Edinburgh, where the theatre was likewise open under Jackson's direction at the same time. Afterwards, the performances were so arranged that one set of actors supplied both houses, and for the first fifteen years of Jackson's management the Dunlop Street Theatre was worked by the Edinburgh company.

Adjoining the theatre in Dunlop Street, Mr. Jackson built a country house, which looked pleasantly on to a pretty flower garden, with an alcove and honeysuckle training up the walls, a domicile which was pulled down about thirty-eight years ago. Jackson Street was also his property.


Barely two months after the opening of the theatre,



in the early spring, a terrible calamity fell on the city. This was an inundation of the Clyde. On the afternoon of Thursday, the 12th March, 1782, the river, swollen by some days of an almost uninterrupted fall of snow and rain, came down in a flood, and before ten o'clock at night it had submerged the Green, stopped all communication with the country, and flooded the Bridgegate to the depth of some feet. The inhabitants, however, were used to inundations of the river. They went quietly to bed, thinking that by the morning, the flood would have subsided. The flood, on the contrary, increased. The ground floors were swamped, fires were extinguished, and the very beds were surrounded by the rising water. Cries and shrieks now resounded on the dark and gloomy night. Flight was found to be impossible. When morning broke, boats laden with provisions were sent up and down the streets, and came back laden with the terror stricken, who dared no longer remain in their abodes. The Saltmarket, Stockwell, Jamaica Street, as well as, the then, village of Gorbals, were overflowed, the latter being described as looking, like an island in an arm of the sea. Had the tide but lasted two hours longer, the two bridges, it is said, must have fallen a sacrifice to its fury. The Clyde had risen twenty feet above its ordinary level. The damage done was enormous. Tobacco, sugar, and other merchandise in large quantities had been swept away and destroyed, and general destitution amongst the poorer classes was threatened. Schemes for charitable contributions were at once set on foot, and amongst those foremost in coming to the aid of the

sufferers was Mr. Jackson. He realised for them a large sum by giving the entire proceeds of a night performance in the theatre. This disinterested act of goodwill and kindness on the part of the manager turned the tide in favour of the theatre. The poorer class began to recognise the fact that although a "son of Belial, there was a somethin' akin to true religion aboot the player." The public extended their patronage, and all classes for a time went to the play. Jackson, thus encouraged, set to work to provide for his patrons the best fare which the stage could then supply.

The first star which ever shone on the boards of Dunlop Street was Mrs. Siddons, who appeared there in 1785. The great actress was then in the first flush of youth and at the zenith of her fame. A year previously she had made her triumphal entry into Edinburgh, and just three years before that, she had taken London by storm by her impersonation of Lady Macbeth. In the Scottish metropolis her receipts amounted to £967. On the evenings on which she acted, the streets became impassable, from the crowds who flocked to see her. People took their stand before the doors frequently at noon. The attraction of going to see the great Siddons disturbed even the arrangements made by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. It found it needful to alter the usual hour of meeting to an earlier one, in consequence of nearly all the young ministers flocking to the play. Porters and servants took up their stations at night to be the first in the morning to secure seats at the box office. The



military, even were required to be on guard at the opening of the doors in the evening to prevent a riot, from the struggles of the public to obtain admission.

"On the occasion of her first visit to Edinburgh, she felt," writes Thomas Campbell in Mrs. Siddon's memoirs, "as if she was speaking to stones. Her elocution fell in vain on these northern flints. At last, she coiled up all her powers to the most emphatic possible utterance of one passage, having previously vowed in her heart if this could not touch the Scotch she would never again cross the Tweed. When it was finished, she paused, and looked at the audience. A deep silence ensued. This was broken only by one voice exclaiming, 'THAT'S NO' BAD.' This ludicrous parsimony of praise convulsed the Edinburgh audience with laughter. But the laugh was followed by such thunders of applause that amidst her stunned and nervous agitation she was not without fear of the galleries coming down. At the conclusion of her engagement, the Faculty of Advocates presented her with a piece of plate." This took place in 1784.

Before coming to Glasgow she returned to London. Her visit to that city was destined to be a sadly memorable one.

By Royal command she read before George the Third and Queen Charlotte at Buckingham Palace. It was on this occasion she was the first to discover symptoms of madness in the King. The good old monarch had always entertained a profound and cordial respect for her personal character, and his

own propriety of conduct had been unquestioned. His Majesty, as the actress was about to quit the Palace, secretly handed her a sheet of paper that was suggestively blank; all but the signature of his name. The meaning of the missive was unmistakable. "She judged," writes Campbell, "too highly both of her sovereign and herself to believe that in his right mind he could show such extraordinary conduct." The event proved the justice of her conclusion. She immediately took the paper to the Queen, who was duly grateful for this "dignified proof of her discretion."

Who supported Mrs. Siddons when she came to Dunlop Street on 12th August, 1785, nobody now can say for certain. It was probably the Edinburgh company. She had no reason to complain of the sluggishness of Scottish enthusiasm in Glasgow. A triumph equal to that the great actress had achieved in Edinburgh awaited her. Some individual in the gallery appears to have been so enchanted that he exclaimed, "Mon! she's a fallen ANGEL," and before she left the city its sober-minded inhabitants had, like those of "the wise men of the east," made her a public presentation.

"If," wrote Tate Wilkinson, "you ask me what is a queen? I should say Mrs. Siddons." "Of all actors," wrote Lord Byron, "Cooke was the most natural, Kemble the most supernatural, Kean the medium between the two. But Mrs. Siddons was worth them all put together." "None," wrote a contemporary of the great actress, "who saw her in the splendour of her meridian, ever pronounced that name without a

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tone and manner more softened and raised than their habitual discourse."

Strange! that a being so beautiful, so loftily graceful, who could excite by her acting an enthusiasm little short of idolatry, should have married, and for love! a being so opposite to her in taste, manners, speech, and appearance as Mr. Siddons was. That gentleman became the lover of the great actress when he was in her father's company of strollers, where the great Sarah would then occasionally have to stand at the wings and twang snuffers to imitate a windmill. He was one of the most unpoetical and egotistical of creatures. "I can play," he boasted, "either Hamlet or Harlequin." "I forbade you," said old Roger Kemble, when he first heard of Sarah's intended marriage, "to marry an *actor*. You will not have disobeyed me when you marry Siddons. He is not, he was not, he never will be an *actor*."

"Sarah's pathos," remarked Mr. Siddons at a private party, "always makes me laugh. Small beer, I think, is good for crying. The day that my wife drinks small beer she cries amazingly. If I was to give her porter, she wouldn't be worth a farthing."



## CHAPTER V.

OVER a space of five years, Jackson continued to manage the Dunlop Street Theatre, bringing to it from time to time the best of stars and an admirable company. Among the former, were the great Henderson, the rival of Garrick; Mrs. Jordan, Lee Lewis, Pope, King, and John Kemble. Of the company, it was said that Glasgow had never seen its equal. It included Stephen Kemble, fat enough to play Falstaff without padding; Henry Siddons, and Mrs. Duncan.

On the 31st July, 1790, Sheridan's "School for Scandal" was acted, with Mr. King in his original character of Sir Peter Teazle, and Miss Farren as Lady Teazle.

The following is a cast of "Much Ado About Nothing," which was played on August 11th, 1790:—

Benedick, . . . Mr. King	Hero, . . . Mrs. Wood
Claudio, . . . Mr. Wood	Beatrice, . . Miss Farren
Dogberry, . . Mr. Wilson	

The subordinate characters were played by Messrs. Stephen Kemble, Young, Rock, Toms, Turpin, Lam-lash, Grant, Duncan, H. Siddons, Mrs. Stephen Kemble, Miss Kemble, Miss Walstein, Mrs. Duncan, and Miss Duncan. "Glasgow," wrote Mr. Strang in 1856, "has never had a company to equal that one."

Shortly after this season, a cloud fell on Jackson. In spite of his most strenuous efforts he failed. Business at the theatre became bad. The public stopped its ears to the tones of any theatrical enchanter. Jackson had finally to own himself defeated. In that same year (1790) he became bankrupt. His financial difficulties arose mainly from his trying to work too many theatres at the same time. These were the Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, and Edinburgh houses. His sequestrated estate was put into the hands of trustees, and his theatres at Edinburgh and Glasgow were advertised to be sold by public auction. Stephen Kemble became the purchaser on the understanding—so Jackson alleged—that he (Jackson) was to be a sharer in the profits, provided he (Jackson) found security for part of the rent. To this arrangement Kemble subsequently demurred, on the ground that Jackson's security was not sufficient. Jackson was eventually excluded, by Kemble's orders, from even a free admission to the theatre, of which for eight years he had been a respected manager.

In 1799 Kemble had given up management, and Jackson again made his appearance in Glasgow. He had arranged with his creditors. He now came forward as an applicant to resume management in conjunction with a Mr. Francis Aiken, of Bedford Square, London. Aiken was one of a large circle of Jackson's aristocratic acquaintances, and they purchased from the trustees, the Theatre Royal. Once more the plays of Shakespeare, "Jane Shore," "Douglas," "Venice Preserved," the comedies of Sheridan, Goldsmith, and Coleman were revived.



Once more, too, was the arena immortalised by Mrs. Siddons.

In the list of dramatic luminaries during Jackson's management we find Jack Bannister, "Handsome, genial Jack," as he was called, before whom, as a light comedian, even Elliston confessed, "he took off his hat."

The year eighteen hundred and four, was destined not to close until a "star" of more than ordinary brightness had illumined the Glasgow theatrical horizon. This luminary was no other than the Infant Roscius—the great Master Henry West Betty. This youthful comet, who was to achieve the greatest dramatic success on record, was an Irish boy, the son of a highly respectable lady and gentleman who resided in Belfast. His taste for the stage had been cultivated from the first with an eye to a future public appearance, and his passion for acting had been excited in the first instance when, accompanied by his parents, he was taken to the Belfast Theatre to see Mrs. Siddons play *Lady Macbeth*. He was a bright, kind-hearted boy, quick at study—so quick that he learnt "Hamlet" in four days—and was a handsome-faced, neat, little fellow to boot. He made his appearance first in Belfast with a success, the like of which was never equalled, and probably never will be, in the annals of the stage. It was on one night in August, 1803, the era of the "Peep o' Day Boys" insurrection, when the streets of Dublin were by law cleared by a certain hour of night. When Betty acted in the latter city, he carried the house at once by storm, and with a force so irresistible, that even the city regulations were set

aside. In honour of the "young Roscius" notices were printed in the bills that people leaving the theatre would not be subject to be stopped by the constabulary. His fame reached London, and engagements were offered the boy at £50 per night, at a period when the best actors in Covent Garden and Drury Lane were more than content to play for £16 per week. Before, however, he went to London he visited the provinces, where his salary was £100 per night. At Liverpool for fourteen performances he cleared £1,520. Off the stage as well as on it he became a demi-god. So great was the Betty mania that no act, however derogatory in itself, was considered *infra dig.* to get a sight of the wonderful boy. Hotel doors were besieged for a mere passing glimpse of the darling of the hour.

Macready relates a story that, when the boy stopped, for the night only, at an hotel in Dunchurch, a lady of one of the leading county families entreated the landlord to get a sight of young Roscius. "She would give anything." The landlord, unwilling to disoblige his patrons, suggested there was but one way in which her wish could be gratified. "Mr. and Mrs. Betty and their son," said the landlord, "are just going to dinner, and if you choose to carry in one of the dishes you can see him; but there is no other way." The lady, very grateful in her acknowledgments, took the dish and made one of the waitresses at the table. The best portrait painters of the day vied for the honour of immortalising him on canvas. Politicians were even at his service. Charles James Fox read Young's Tragedy of "The Revenge" to the boy, and William

Pitt once made a motion that the House should adjourn in order that he and other members might be able to see young Betty act that night. When through overwork, the lad became ill, daily bulletins were issued and waited for as eagerly as if he had been the king himself. Even the University of Cambridge made him the subject of a prize medal. Crowds surrounded the theatre every night he played. Soldiers guarded the entrance and lined the passages and approaches. When he acted in Covent Garden, Drury Lane, with a very weak programme, took over £300 from the overflow of its neighbour.

Before, however, he made his *début* in London he appeared in Dunlop Street. Every lobby, every passage in the theatre was packed. Women fainted, men struggled into every nook and corner, satisfied if they could but hear the tones of the young phenomenon. The roar of plaudits which greeted the lad's entrance on the stage, as young Norval, was equalled only by the praises lavished by press and public on him the next day. To such an unprecedented extent were the laudations carried, that a local critic who dared to write disparagingly of young Roscius raised such a storm about his head that he was obliged (so it is said) to leave the city.

Whether Master Betty was deserving of this popularity remains, however, an open question. As to his talents, critics disagree. Macready describes him as a miracle of beauty, grace, and genius. Mrs. Inchbald complained that his preaching tones fatigued her. "He is a clever little boy," she said, "and had I never seen boys act before, I might have thought him ex-

quisite." Young Betty was no scholar. He was remarkable for dropping his h's. No originality of conception seems to have characterised his embodiments. He owed almost everything to one Houghton, an old Irish prompter, who taught him how to act all his most successful parts. In the books from which he studied might be found marked, not merely the inflections of his voice, but every movement of his hands, arms, and legs. Every tone, look, and gesture was stereotyped. Young Betty was a really good fellow, kind and generous, very unpretentious, and not spoilt by flattery. He possessed, too, the rather rare quality of gratitude. He confessed his obligation to his old tutor, and one of his first acts was to settle an annuity on the ever-afterwards grateful prompter.

"The popularity," says Campbell the poet, "of this baby-faced boy, was an hallucination in the public mind and a disgrace to our theatrical history. Critics may disagree. One thing is certain, that whether Master Betty was a transcendent genius or not, his father and mother were wise in removing the boy as a boy from a profession in which he would possibly have failed as a man."

On leaving Glasgow Master Betty went to Edinburgh, and in connection with his engagement Jackson made the following announcement:—"It is one of those singularities of nature that neither history nor tradition can furnish, but which is now beheld by us, but never can be seen again till the Author of all things condescends to endue another stripling in embryo with a similar incredible combination of stage endowment for the gratification of contem-

porary admiration." This "Micawberian" flourish was, however, destined to be slightly subdued and toned down, on the first night's engagement of the hero of the hour at Edinburgh. In order to add *eclat* to the reception of Master Betty as Young Norval, Jackson invited Mr. Home, the author of "Douglas," who was then in his eightieth year, to witness the play, and seated him at a side wing. The curtain fell, the applause was at its height, and acclamations of delight resounded through the theatre at the acting of young Roscius. Calls at the end of the performance were not then in vogue. The applause, however, was deafening. Mr. Home, in his innocence, mistook the applause for young Betty for acclamations at his own play. He stepped on to the stage and respectfully bowed his acknowledgments. The plaudits swelled into a storm at the sight of an old Edinburgh favourite, dramatist, and ex-clergyman, and so served completely to unhorse the triumph for at least that night of Master Betty. Home, however, said afterwards—"This is the first time I ever saw the part of 'Douglas' played, that is according to my idea of the character at the time I conceived and wrote it."

Betty's career was as brief as it was triumphal. In little more than two years he quitted the garish lights, and enrolled himself as a student at Cambridge University. When he had finished his curriculum he returned to the stage; but alas! his absence from it, though but for so short a period, had been long enough to break the spell. The boy had grown into a man. The novelty was no more. A "king"

had arisen who "knew not" Henry West Betty. Another idol had displaced the former one in the minds of the fickle public. No Houghton either was at hand to coach the actor for fresh triumphs, and so young Roscius quietly and wisely retired into private life. He passed the remainder of a very long life as a retired country gentleman, and died at Cheltenham about sixteen years ago at the age of eighty-three.

For some time prior to this, affairs at Dunlop Street had been looking anything but cheerful. Jackson had become careless, not to say penurious, in his management of the theatre. The Glasgow theatrical journals were complaining of the meagreness of his company, of the wretched mounting of the pieces, and of one man playing three parts in the same piece. "Romeo and Juliet" was played. "When Romeo spoke of the beggarly account of empty benches," writes *The Observer*, "there was a general titter. As far as the audience was concerned, it was a literal fact." "The theatre," writes the *Register*, "closed this evening, after a three weeks very unsuccessful campaign. We think the managers need not ascribe their want of success to the badness of the times, but to their own bad management." Then comes a lament as to the want of novelty in the pieces which had been played. "We have had no new plays, probably on account of the expense of paying their carriage of 2s. 9d. per coach. Had the pieces been provided with proper actors," the critic goes on to say, "each night should have proved a bumper." The season wound up with the "Merchant of Venice," in which the Senate was

represented by four miserable-looking, dirty reddish figures wrapped in "faded gowns."

Taste in theatrical matters has undergone strange changes in a century. What was then deemed a tragedy would possibly now be considered good stock for a three-act farce. During the season Jackson had produced amongst other novelties Monk Lewis's then popular tragedy of the "Castle Spectre." The public were delighted with it. The best tragedians of the day acted in it. The critics pronounced it a "splendid" drama. Seventy years afterwards, Mr. Buckstone, being just then at his wit's end for novelty, revived the piece, with a strong cast, at the Haymarket. The audience, most of whom had never heard of the play before, regarded it in the light of a burlesque, and, to the chagrin of all concerned, laughed heartily at it from beginning to end.

With 1804 the glories of Dunlop Street may be said to have passed, and for a quarter of a century its triumphs were destined to slumber.

Twenty-two summers had come and gone since the memorable opening of the theatre in Dunlop Street. The once bright and handsome face of its manager had become furrowed with care, and Age had made itself known in the loss of that spirit of enterprise which had characterised the earlier years of his theatrical career. The city had now increased. Its boundaries had become considerably widened. What had been rugged lanes and waste patches of ground when the theatre was first built, were now ornamented with villas and pleasure grounds. St. Enoch's Croft had developed into a park, and Queen Street was

now occupied by handsome villas, in which the wealthiest class resided. "From time immemorial (writes Senex in his 'Old Glasgow') a thoroughfare existed in the line of this now important artery of the city. Cow Loan, as Queen Street had been formerly called, led from St. Enoch's Gait northward to a set of old roads which branched off near the locality of the Cowcaddens. It was by this ancient loan that one hundred and fifty years before, Cromwell had led his sturdy troopers into the city." Time had effected a revolution not alone in the outward aspect of the city, but also in the minds and prejudices of the people. The venture of the playhouse, made twenty-two years before, had, despite of certain transitory failures, been regarded as a success. So well, indeed, had it answered on the whole, that theatrical enterprises were now looked upon as a pretty safe commercial speculation. By no class of people was this idea entertained more favourably than by certain merchants of Glasgow. "Dunlop Street," it was conceived, was not a theatre in appearance worthy of the city. A playhouse, of greater elegance and more commodious in structure, promised, if well managed, advantage to the public and profit to the shareholders. A difficulty was felt at first in obtaining an eligible site. At length, however, one was found. The unwelcome news fell on the ears of Mr. Jackson and his partner that a new theatre was to be built in Queen Street.

Queen Street was, in 1805, at the extreme end westward of the city. It was within a stone's throw of the Assembly Rooms (afterwards the Athenæum) in Ingram Street, and within hail of the main



thoroughfare of Argyle Street, which was just then straggling out in Grahamstown. A subscription was soon set afoot; and the shares for the new theatre were sold at £25 each. The particular spot selected for the theatre was, that near which now stands the Royal Exchange. The west boundary of the theatre ran nearly in line of the modern North Court off Exchange Square. The Joint Stock Committee of Merchants comprised the names of Messrs. Lawrence Craigie, John Hamilton, Dugald Bannatyne, William Penny, and Robert Dennistoun. At the top of Queen Street West, was an unsightly spot of earth, on which stood a decayed farmhouse. This latter building the Committee purchased from the Magistrates; also a piece of meadow flat ground reaching along Queen Street northward to the line of what we now know as St. Vincent Place—then likewise a waste piece of land—and these were to form the area on which the new theatre was to be built. Preparations for the erection of the building were at once set on foot. Architects were summoned to lay before the Committee their plans; and builders and workmen engaged. The cost of the entire building was to be £18,500, and so far as taste, ingenuity, and money could effect it, the new theatre was to be the finest in the three kingdoms. In less than a twelve-month the beautiful theatre was completed. It *was* really beautiful. The front was composed of an arcade basement, supporting six ionic columns, 30 feet in height, with corresponding pilasters, entablatures, and appropriate devices. The principal vestibule led to the boxes by a double flight of stairs, and

was separated from the corridors by a screen interspersed with Corinthian columns. The proscenium was 30 feet wide, and decorated with antique ornaments; and the stage balconies were tastefully executed. The scenery was by the celebrated Naismith, who resided then in Edinburgh. The act drop exhibited a picturesque view of the Firth of Clyde, and was said to be one of the finest bits of scenic illustration in the kingdom. The theatre was seated for nearly 1,500 people, and so constructed as to hold when full about £260. The yearly rental was fixed at £1,200. On its stage were destined to appear some of the grandest artists Britain had ever known. The names of the actors and actresses who "strutted and fretted" their hour on that stage, so far from being "heard no more," speak to us still of a past which has no equal in the present. They include the Kembles, Cooke, Kean, Macready, Munden, the elder Mathews, Mrs. Siddons, Miss Farren, Jack Bannister, Mrs. Jordan, Dowton, Incledon, Fawcett, Elliston, Braham, Liston, Miss Stephens, Charles Mayne Young, Sinclair, Miss M. Tree, Catalani, the great Emery, and Mrs. Glover.

Up to the year 1858 there stood in Argyle Street, on the site where the warehouse of Mann, Byars & Co. now stands, at the corner of Virginia Street, a quaint, old-fashioned tavern with the sign of the "Black Bull." For eighty years it had opened its doors to the best of the punch-drinking community in the city. In this same hostelry were discussed on many a winter evening gone, over long "clays" and glasses, the most important topics of the day—

city improvements, politics, hunting, fishing, sound doctrine, and the drama. The Black Bull was the home of all the clubs of any repute in Glasgow in the early days of the nineteenth century. Few men of any social standing in those days but were members of some one or more of the clubs that frequented the Black Bull. "These were drinking days, and men drank hard," and hiccupped fidelity to "each brither man" over their pipes and punch. At a period when Glasgow boasted but two hotels, the Black Bull was that generally honoured as the resting-place of the theatrical stars. It was the rendezvous consequently not alone for sportsmen, politicians, merchants, and tradesmen, but likewise the resort of actors. There "they most did love to congregate." To this same tavern, after the evening's work was done, the manager of Dunlop Street resorted, and it was doubtless over the "britherly bowl" of punch which the "Black Bull" was famed for brewing, that Messrs. Jackson and Aiken gained the good will of the proprietors of the new theatre, and their promise to view an application from them favourably. Certain it is that these gentlemen were amongst the first applicants for the management of the Queen Street Theatre. Their overture met with a ready response, and this in despite, too, of the deplorable way in which Dunlop Street had been mismanaged. The theatre was let to them on the condition that they should bring to Glasgow the best actors and actresses the market could produce.

Terms were arranged, and nothing remained but to fix the date when the theatre should be opened, and what should be the opening piece. A blank verse

play was deemed then indispensable. The old comedies had been run upon to any extent, and Tragedy, it was deemed, would be an ill omen for an inaugural performance. At this period no piece was in greater request than Tobin's new comedy of "The Honeymoon."

Poor Tobin! that sad example "of the fallacious hopes by which half mankind are lured to vexatious enterprise." He had passed many years in the drudgery of writing plays, but in vain. Whether his other plays would have pleased the public, nobody now knows. The managers never gave them a chance. They were never accepted. At length Tobin, prematurely aged, worn in body and mind, and poverty-stricken, wrote "The Honeymoon." This was accepted; but the broken-hearted young author never knew its fate. Shattered in health, he had sought rest and change of scene in a sea voyage, leaving his play in charge of his brother, to present to the managers. When the vessel reached its destination (the West Indies) the news had spread that "The Honeymoon" had created in London a perfect *furor*; but the ears which should have been most gladdened with the sound, were stopped for ever. Quietly, but unexpectedly, Poor Tobin had died on the voyage, and had found an ocean grave. Tobin's comedy was filling Covent Garden nightly. It was in demand in every large theatre in the provinces.

The waves had closed over Poor Tobin's lifeless body but four months when his comedy was destined to produce in Glasgow almost as great a stir as it had done six months before in London.

The announcement of it on the opening of the Queen Street Theatre ran as follows :—

The Public is respectfully informed that the New  
Theatre will be opened Wednesday,  
April 24, 1805.

A NEW OCCASIONAL ADDRESS,

After which the new and favourite Comedy, now acting in  
London with universal applause, called

“THE HONEYMOON,”

With entire new Dresses, Scenery, and Decorations,  
and the Farce of

“RAISING THE WIND.”

Tickets to be had of Mr. Wright, grocer, Argyle Street, and  
of Mr. M'Gregor at the Box Office of the Theatre, where places  
for the Boxes may be taken.

The cast, composed of members of the Edinburgh  
company, was as follows :—

The Duke Aranza, Mr. Eyre	Jacques, . . Mr. Turpin
Rolando, . . . Mr. Evatt	Balthazar, Mr. Hollingsworth
Count Montalban,	Zamora, . . . Mrs. Turpin
Mr. Flowerden	Volante, . . Mrs. Young
Lampedo, . . Mr. Berry	Juliana, . . . Mrs. Eyre

The theatre was open four nights in the week—  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday.\*

\* It is about this time we find the first intimation of elocution being taught in the city by a professional. Mr. Toms, a comedian who had won his spurs at Edinburgh, appeared in the stock company in Glasgow and announced—“That having taught the practice of Elocution with great success in Edinburgh, he wished to instruct a limited number of pupils in the same art during his stay in Glasgow at ‘Ross’ Lodgings, Queen Street.”

The first legitimate star who appeared in Queen Street was Miss Duncan (Mrs. Davison), the original Juliana of "The Honeymoon," who made her *début* on June 24th as Lady Teazle. The charm of Miss Duncan's acting, so I have been told by some few who were old enough to have remembered her at this time, has seldom or ever been equalled. Some forty years after her appearance in Glasgow I, then but a youth, had the honour of speaking to her. She had long before that, retired from the footlights; and for many years had been married to a Captain Davison—a military gentleman of the "Turveydrop" build—and who was always under "pressure of pecuniary liabilities." I can just remember being taken by the hand of my father and led into her room, where a very beautiful old lady, with a refined but sickly face, white hair, and attenuated frame, rose from the sofa on which she had been lying, and, coming forward with a feeble step, kindly laid her hand on my head and smoothed my hair. My father told me afterwards never to forget that I had been "patted on the head by the great Mrs. Davison." Mrs. Davison was mother to the late J. W. Davison, for so many years musical critic to the *Times*.

The name of Harry Johnstone was, with Glasgow playgoers, as recently even as 1861, a "household word." He was born at Lanark and reared in London. As an amateur he had won the golden opinions of his confreres, and at the age of eighteen he made his first appearance as an actor. The tragedy of "Douglas" being then the rage, Johnstone (who was a godson of Lord Erskine) selected "Young

Norval" for his first appearance in Edinburgh. "His youthful appearance," writes his biographer, "graceful form, and handsome expressive countenance, won for him the universal approbation of his countrymen." It was about this time that the stage was undergoing a radical change with regard to costume. Macbeth, which used to be played in a Court suit of scarlet and gold lace, surmounted by a wig "as large as any now worn by the gravest of our Barons of the Exchequer," was now being costumed as a tobacconist's dummy Highlander. Subsequently it was held to be unquestionable that the correct costume of nearly every Scotch character (if serious) should be that of the Highlander of the snuff shop. It was Sir Walter Scott himself who induced Kemble to substitute for the shuttlecock head dress of ostrich feathers, which he wore as the ambitious Thane, the eagle's feather. Young Norval had always been dressed in the trows and Scotch jacket. Johnstone appeared in the character in full Highland costume—in kilt, breast-plate, shield, claymore, and bonnet. There was a momentary pause of astonishment on the part of the audience; then an approving murmur; then, one burst of plaudits, which swelled into an ovation. The whole house rose, and "such a reception," writes his biographer, "was never witnessed in the halls of a theatre before." The reverend author, Mr. Home, was present, and at the conclusion publicly pronounced Johnstone the beau ideal of his hero—a compliment, however, which he had lavished on Master Betty a short time before. Johnstone was said to be one of the best Sir Pertinax MacSycophants on the stage, and Mr. Phelps gained

his conception of the character from Johnstone, who, when Phelps was studying the character, was an old man. The excellence of Johnstone's acting of the part may be easily explained—he was an extraordinary mimic, and had copied G. F. Cooke, who was the god of the young actor's idolatry. Johnstone had an odd style, too, of imitating persons' manners, gait, and gesture, without even attempting their voices. He would entertain his friends by showing how the principal actors would play harlequin—the agile spring of Lewis, the elephantine ponderosity of George Frederick Cooke, the solemn saltatory efforts of Kemble, and finally the leap *a la* Bologna, the most celebrated harlequin of his day. On one occasion when performing the latter feat he jumped literally through a window, and fell from a height of 16 feet into the park below. In Edinburgh Johnstone was declared by the critics to be the best Scotchman they had seen on the boards for many a day. To those, therefore, who had not seen Cooke, Johnstone's acting must have been most pleasingly powerful. Prior to his appearing in Queen Street, he had played a short engagement with Jackson in Dunlop Street, and on his appearance in Queen Street the audience was prepared to give him a cordial greeting. To a remarkable episode in the life of Mr. Johnstone I may have occasion subsequently to refer.


A Mr. Rock, an excellent actor of old men, and a great favourite in Glasgow, had taken the place of Mr. Aiken in the management of the Queen Street Theatre. The wheel of fortune, however, or rather misfortune, with Jackson never turned. What opinions



his management was gaining for him in Glasgow may be inferred from what the *Monthly Mirror* wrote about it in Edinburgh, at the close of his season there in 1806:—"The experience of this and the two or three last seasons ought to convince Mr. John Jackson that the tide of popularity, though never in his favour, has irretrievably turned against him. It would be kicking against the pricks to attempt a renewed management."

Age had now impaired the powers of the once indefatigable actor. He felt himself no longer able to breast the tide of trouble which beset him. Abused by the press, deserted by the public, his health gave way. With a constitution as shattered as his hopes, ruined in health, prospects, and means, he became the victim of disease. Threatened with imprisonment for debt, and with misfortune rather increasing than diminishing, Death came as a kindly relief to the once prosperous but now broken-hearted manager. Within one twelvemonth of his taking the reins of the Queen Street Theatre Jackson had gone over to the "majority."

To his three children Jackson bequeathed his interest in the Dunlop Street Theatre. They, in conjunction with his co-lessee, Mr. Aiken, sold it in 1807 by public auction. The purchaser was Mr. Andrew Thomson, a Glasgow merchant, son of the old George Thomson of "Thomson's Bank," which had failed fourteen years previously. Thomson knew nothing about management, and he soon found the theatre an incubus. For a brief period he endeavoured to keep it open, but after a few disastrous failures he



converted part of the building into a warehouse for the sale of West Indian produce. The rest of the theatre was let for almost any purpose to anybody who cared to risk the expenses contingent on a night's public entertainment. Mr. Knowles, a lecturer on astronomy, who was very eminent about this time, took it. Then a well-known quondam jeweller, Mr. Bauldy Cauchrane, with a mouth of alarming dimensions, would appear on a pasteboard horse, and sing with much gusto the "Greenock Post" and "Duncan M'Callaghan." At another time some itinerant manager would bring out the dramas of "Blue Beard," "Cinderella," "Valentine and Orson," "Robinson Crusoe," "Beauty and the Beast," and other triumphs of histrionic art, whilst Montignani, an Italian dancing-master, "refreshed the weeping audience with a preparation resembling coffee and chocolate in the small side room." On the same boards appeared the celebrated Tom Cribb, the pugilist, wearing the English champion's belt; Molyneaux, the gigantic black prize-fighter; Fuller, Jack Carter, Crosbie, and other members of "the fancy," who starred it at that time; and last, though not least, the celebrated William Cobbett. With hair as white as snow, blue coat, gilt buttons, white vest, long drab gaiters and inexpressibles, Cobbett lectured in the same boxing arena on Parliamentary Reform, Repeal of the Corn Laws, abolition of the East India Company's Charter, and other favourite topics of that erratic pamphleteer. Of the engagements at the old theatre at this time Cobbett's proved the best. There were those living thirty years ago who used to quote many and many a

happy sentence from these said lectures. One of these I may be pardoned for quoting. It writes a volume as to the style of the man. A certain philosopher gravely remarked to Cobbett—"I hope, sir, the time may come when the poor man after the labour of the day may refresh himself by reading Bacon." "Much more to the purpose, my dear sir," returned Cobbett, "if the time could come when the poor man, after the labour of the day, might refresh himself by *eating* Bacon."

To return to Queen Street. The new management did their best to fulfil their engagement with the proprietors. The length of the journey from London and the high salaries demanded by stars compelled economy in the way of entertainments. With the exception of Miss Smith, from Drury Lane, few if any celebrities visited Glasgow till the June of 1807. The playgoing public were then set astir by the announcement that "an engagement had been made, for a few nights only, with the greatest living actor of the day—George Frederick Cooke." He was to open as Richard the Third, to follow with Peregrine in "John Bull," then with Petruchio and with Pertinax MacSycophant in Macklin's "Man of the World." The greatest excitement prevailed, and places were soon at a premium for the opening night. Cooke was in more than one respect an object of interest. He had not only obtained the credit of being one of the greatest actors of the day, but he was also one of the greatest tipplers. His antecedents, too, were the talk of the town. How had he come into favour? What was the special quality of his talent? Many at that


time could remember Mr. Cooke's first attempts as an amateur ; how, when he was apprenticed to a printer, he had made his first appearance on the stage as a vocalist, playing Young Meadows in Bickerstaff's charming little opera of "Love in a Village." How he had on his first appearance in London as an actor signally failed, and how he had served his stage apprenticeship at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, at the highest salary then known in the provinces—viz., two guineas per week. Mr. Cooke was forty-five years of age before he first took London by storm as a Shakesperian actor. His conception of the character of Richard the Third had come on the Londoners like a thunder clap. They had been accustomed to hear in the part only the measured cadences, and to see the solemn strides of John Philip Kemble. Cooke's triumph at Covent Garden was so pronounced that the directors gave him a free benefit, the profits of which were £560. Kemble was at the time manager. Cooke's success as Richard was so complete that, after a struggle, the great John resigned the character to him, and never afterwards played it. "My remembrance of George Frederick Cooke," writes Macready, "whose peculiarities added so much to the effect of his performance, served to detract from my confidence in assuming the crook-back tyrant. Cooke's varieties of tone seemed limited to a loud harsh croak, descending to the lowest audible murmur ; but there was such significance in each inflection, look, and gesture, and such impressive earnestness in his whole bearing, that he compelled your attention and interest. He was the Richard of the day, and in Shylock, Iago, Sir

Archy MacSarcasm, and Sir Pertinax MacSycophant he defied competition. His popularity far exceeded that of Kemble." He became, however, the slave of intemperance, remaining for days together in a state of debauch. The consummate talent of an actor whom Edmund Kean called "the finest in the world" leads me to pause for a moment in this narrative to describe some of his irregularities.

Cooke's drunkenness subjected him frequently to the signal disapprobation of the audience, upon whom he would sometimes retort with more vehemence than delicacy. It is reported that on one occasion, when a young officer in the stage box made himself conspicuous by interrupting the play, Cooke went close up to him and in his distinctly audible pianissimo addressed him, "D— you, sir, you an ensign! Sir, the King (God bless him!) can make any fool an Officer, but it is only the great God Almighty that can make an Actor." At another time in Liverpool, when he was so drunk as to be scarcely able to go through his part, the audience most justly manifested their indignation. Cooke stopped and addressed to them this insolent affront—"Your applause or your disapproval are indifferent to me. There's not one brick (*hic*) upon another in your town that is not cemented (*hic*) with a fellow-creature's blood"—alluding to the African slave trade, then principally carried on in Liverpool ships.

Though maddened with the fumes of liquor, the chain of his ideas would continue unbroken. In his wildest fits he would begin a dissertation on the histrionic art, and he seldom or ever became al-

together lost to the consciousness of who was present, or what was the special line of stage business his actor companions who might be his guests had been playing, and his wit never forsook him. It was no uncommon thing for him, when at his lodgings in the provinces, after the performance, to get hopelessly drunk, and throwing up the window of his room to shout for "the Watch." Old Mathews, the celebrated actor, was with him on one of these occasions. The latter had been playing Mordecai in the farce of "Love à la Mode" that night to Cooke's Sir Archy MacSarcasm. He had vainly tried to get away. Cooke suddenly seized him, flung him into a chair, and called for the Watch. The alarmed landlady entered, followed by the Watch, and demanded, "What's the matter?" Cooke, appearing to tremble in every limb, responded, "Matter! Murder's the matter!" "Murder!" echoed the affrighted group. The cry was taken up outside, and a crowd of the terrified inhabitants of the little town soon assembled with awe-stricken faces round the door. "You'll find the murderer there," said Cooke, pointing to Mathews. "I give that man in charge!" "What do you mean?" echoed the trembling Mathews. "To my certain knowledge," hiccupped Cooke, "he has this night committed a most atrocious cold-blooded murder. He has most barbarously murdered an in-offensive gentleman named Mordecai. I charge him with it, in the name of Macklin, the author of 'Love a la Mode.'" Here Mathews by a desperate effort wrenched himself away, Cooke hurling after him the candle and the candlestick; the landlady and Watch



retreated likewise with great precipitancy. With the same grim humour on another occasion he repeated almost the same scene with the greatest vocalist of the day. He accused Incledon of robbing him (Cooke always believed in his own powers as a vocalist)—of robbing him of "*notes*." On this occasion he dragged Incledon out of bed to give him in charge. On one occasion he was reprov'd by many persons in the pit, who suddenly turned their backs upon his entrée as Falstaff. With great readiness he staggered forward and called out (quoting Falstaff's famous words) "Call ye this *backing* your friend; plague o' such *backing*." Once whilst playing Sir Archy MacSarcasm, he persisted in calling himself Sir Pertinax MacSycophant. "Sir Archy MacSarcasm, you mean," cried a voice from the gallery. "It's a' the same thing," cried Cooke, "ye've paid yer siller, and ye've a richt to hae what name ye chuse. Sir Archy, then, if ye will hae it so." When his drinking fits were on him he became all but a maniac sometimes. Once, when in a public-house, he quarrelled with a soldier. "Come out," roared Cooke, "and I'll fight ye." "You're a gentleman," pleaded the frightened soldier; "you've money, and everybody will take your side." "Look ye here," cried Cooke, turning out the contents of his pockets, and producing the sum, "here's three hundred pounds; all I have in the world—there." He staggered towards the fireplace, and threw the bank-notes into the fire. "Now I'm as poor as you; come out and fight, you villain!" He used to drink out of a small wine glass, and was the creator of the now stale joke: "I've left off drinking in a great


measure." Strange to say, he was always less imperfect in his part when intoxicated than he was when he had had no stimulant.

Cooke's influence over the public was astounding. In Glasgow and elsewhere he continually disappointed his audience, and night after night the announcement would have to be made that Mr. Cooke could not appear in consequence of "a sudden and serious indisposition." Everybody knew, of course, the nature of the indisposition. After these bouts when Cooke would appear, he seemed always profoundly penitent. On more than one of these occasions when he stepped on to the Queen Street stage he was greeted with mingled cheers, groans, and laughter. These were succeeded by reiterated cries from all parts of the house of "Apology!" Then Cooke would step forward with a solemn stride and mournful look. He would shake his head, bow very low, and laying his hand upon his heart, say, "Ladies and gentlemen, I have had an attack of *my old complaint*." The appeal was irresistible. The man was at once pardoned, and the great actor allowed to continue his part. The last time he ever acted, was in New York, where he died. He stuck dead in the part of "Horatio" in the "Fair Penitent." When he came off the stage he said—"I knew how it would be! This comes of playing when I am SOBER."

Cooke's impersonations were not all good. He could do nothing well but what was villainous. His "Jacques," in "As You Like It," instead of being a moralising enthusiast, was merely a grave scoffer. In "Macbeth," in place of a majestic villain, he exhibited



nothing but a desperate craftiness, and of his "Hamlet," writes a distinguished critic, "one would willingly spare the recollection. The most accomplished character on the stage," the same critic goes on to say, "is converted by Mr. Cooke into an unpolished, obstinate, sarcastic madman. He is great in the hypocrisy that endeavours to conceal itself by seriousness as in 'Iago' and 'Stukely;' in the hypocrisy that endeavours to conceal itself by gaiety and sarcasm as in 'Sir Archy MacSarcasm;' and, lastly, in the most impudent hypocrisy such as that of 'Sir Pertinax Mac-Sycophant' and 'Richard the Third.'" Knowing his habits, it is surprising that such a man should keep a diary, but, nevertheless, he did, and the following is his account of his first visit to Glasgow:—"On Wednesday, June 11th, left the Castle and Falcon, Aldersgate Street, London, in a Manchester coach, about two in the afternoon; supped at Northampton, breakfasted next morning at Leicester, dined at Buxton, and arrived at Manchester early the same evening. Friday, 13th.—By *laying too long in bed* missed coach. Left in a post-chaise, accompanied by Mr. Rock, with whom I left London. At Bolton, overtook the coach, but was soon obliged to leave it *in consequence of illness*. Proceeded in a gig and afterwards in a post-chaise to Preston, thence to Lancaster, where we dined, and in a coach set off for Kendal, where we supped and slept. Early on Saturday morning we proceeded to Carlisle, where we dined. Set out in the mail for Glasgow, which we reached next morning. Early in the afternoon Mr. Rock and his son came and conducted me to a lodging in the same street opposite



the old theatre in Dunlop Street with him and Mrs. Rock. It was agreed I should make one of the family during my stay. On Monday, the 16th, I went to the new Theatre Royal, and afterwards called on Mr. Jackson, who has been many years a manager."

When Cooke stepped on to the stage, he was greeted with vociferous plaudits, and received throughout as the magnate of the day. He faced an audience which completely filled the theatre. In his outward appearance, the audience saw a man of somewhat ponderous gait, but with a marvellously expressive face. The contour of his features, like those of Edmund Kean, was rather Jewish—a long somewhat hooked nose of uncommon breadth between the eyes, which were fiery, dark, and at times terribly expressive; a lofty and broad forehead, and the muscles around the mouth pointedly marked. His countenance, it was said, was not so dignified as Kemble's, but its expression, especially when exhibiting the worst passions of our nature, was stronger. He made his first appearance in Glasgow, as in London, in "Richard," his second as "Shylock." "Strange!" writes the author of "Our Old Actors," "that a few years afterwards Kean, who so strongly resembled him, should have won his triumphs in the same parts, with only the order reversed." The writer might have added—Like Kean, too, he was an illegitimate child, and like Kean he had served as a sailor.

CHAPTER VI.

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THE next manager who essayed to cater for the patrons of Queen Street was a Mr. Beaumont. Who he was, what he was, where he came from, or whither he went, no deponent sayeth. The season was one which proved neither long nor prosperous, and this in despite of an exceptionally good company, "selected," as Mr. Beaumont announced, "from the principal theatres in Europe. The following list of names may serve to give an idea of its strength. Amongst the members of the stock company were Mr. Talbot, Mr. Holland, Mr. Wewitzer, Mr. Oxberry, Miss Kelly, Mrs. Glover, Mr. Byrne, and Mrs. Orger. Of the majority of these ladies and gentlemen little need be said, except that most of them subsequently made their mark in London. Four, however, claim special notice. These are Miss Kelly, Mr. Byrne, Mrs. Glover, and Mr. Montague Talbot.

Fanny Kelly was called the "Child of Nature." Under the advice of her uncle—the well-known musician, Michael Kelly—she made a provincial essay at Glasgow in the corps of Mr. Beaumont. Her *début*, however, was something akin to a failure. She was at the time, barely seventeen years of age, and of a nature singularly sensitive. On the occasion of her first appearance in Queen Street she suffered so acutely from

“stage fright” that her tones scarcely caught the ears even of those seated in the first row of the pit. Her nervousness was absolutely painful not alone to her fellow-actors, but even to those associated with her in her scenes. Time, however, served to dispel her fears. Her voice, which was found to be singularly melodious—for she had, in the first instance, been trained as a vocalist—grew stronger; and the schooling in courage which she gained in Queen Street may be said to have laid the foundation of her fortunes. Her success in Glasgow was sufficiently pronounced to reach the ears of Colman, the manager of the Haymarket, and within a twelvemonth of her treading the Queen Street stage, she had won the hearts of the habitués of the most fashionable theatre in London. Fascinating as her acting had proved in the metropolis of the west, it paled before the zeal and passion it created in the breasts of her London admirers.

Love letters poured in upon her from all quarters. One hapless adorer, who had been rejected, went mad and fired a pistol at her whilst she was acting. The bullet passed over her head, and over that of an actor who was on the stage with her at the time, and lodged in the back of the scene. Another outrage of a similar nature, and almost under the same circumstances, was made on Miss Kelly at Dublin. She, as before, escaped unhurt, but the gentleman who was on the stage with her at the time was slightly wounded.

An actor who was destined subsequently to play no insignificant part in the management of the Queen Street Theatre now comes upon the scene. This was Mr. Byrne. Years afterwards his name became well



known in London and elsewhere, as the father of the celebrated Oscar Byrne, who was for so many years ballet master of the Princess's during the management of the theatre by Charles Kean.

Mrs. Glover's is a name which old playgoers still pronounce with reverence. In Mr. Beaumont's company she figured as the leading lady. As a tragedian she was not, however, destined to shine, but in the line of business called "Old Women" the stage has never seen her equal. Who of us that ever saw that rubicund face, that massive form, that sparkling eye; who that remembers now that singularly rich, round voice, whose every tone spoke volumes; who that ever witnessed her "Mrs. Candour," her "Mrs. Malaprop," her "Mrs. Heidleberg," her "Widow Green," her "Mrs. Coddle," but must bow the knee to the memory of this truly great actress. Amongst a heap of old plays which we now seldom see or even hear of, except in connection with some musty bookstall or some antiquarian's library, was Dryden's "Alexander the Great." It was in those days an immense favourite. The great Peg Woffington had immortalised it by that memorable dagger *fracas* with poor little George Ann Bellamy. It was in this Mrs. Glover played. On July 4th, 1807, this revered ancestor of the two gentlemen of the same name who have since figured so favourably in the two highest forms of art, made her *début* in Glasgow. She played also "Roxalana" in the "Sultan," and on the following Tuesday "Lady Teazle" to the "Sir Peter" of Mr. Rock, the "Charles Surface" of Mr. Dwyer, and the "Joseph" of the elocutionist, Mr. Toms.

The light comedian and leading man of the company during this season was Montague Talbot. Glasgow playgoers said of him that he was in his line one of the most elegant and refined actors of the day. It was of Talbot a playgoer wrote :—


By art and nature chastely fit  
To play the gentleman or wit ;  
Not Harris's nor Colman's boards,  
Nor all that Drury Lane affords,  
Can paint the rakish Charles so well,  
Or give such life to Mirabel,\*  
Or show for light and airy sport,  
So exquisite a Doricourt.

Over many a social glass drank (years afterwards) in the cosy parlour of the Black Bull, Talbot used to tell how, years before he came to Scotland, he was the first who discovered the notorious forgeries of William Henry Ireland. Ireland had long been his friend and associate. When youths, they shared the same chambers in the Temple. "All between them was candour and confidence." Suddenly a change comes over the spirit of the dream. Ireland talks less and shuns Talbot's society. Talbot suspects something wrong ; some secret working for somebody, or at something. Whenever he attempts to enter his friend's room, he finds the door locked ; and when he knocks he has to wait some time before he can gain admission. Ireland's desk, he then notes, is always kept locked ; all his papers hidden. "Strange," thinks Talbot, "for a man whose habits have been hitherto rather careless than otherwise." Neither jest nor re-

\* Farquar comedy of "The Inconstant."

monstrance served to open Ireland's lips as to what he had been doing. Talbot's suspicions were excited. One morning, the day being warm, Ireland opened his window, and placed himself before it at his desk. With the door locked, he was situated so as to be able to discern an interloper. It seemed impossible a surprise could happen. Talbot withdrew from his own desk—also at his own window—for some time in order to lull suspicion in Ireland's mind. He then crept out of his door on his hands and knees till he arrived under the window. His friend sat there in fancied security. Talbot then raised himself slowly and quietly, and when he had attained the window sill dexterously started up and seized upon Ireland's papers. Poor Ireland started, and stammered some excuse. Talbot glanced at the papers. Ireland then made a virtue of necessity. He owned the papers were forgeries of Shakspeare's signature, and also of a play. The *fracas* at Drury Lane some few years afterwards, when Sheridan attempted to palm off Ireland's "Vortigern" as a hitherto undiscovered play of Shakspeare's, drove Ireland to a public confession of the fraud.

August 2nd, 1807, witnessed the first appearance of the celebrated Jack Bannister, who appeared as "Dr. Pangloss," and also in the drama of the "Children in the Wood." The advent of this actor suggests a remark as complacent to our conservative notions of the superiority of our modern acting. Everything which is natural goes to the credit solely of the present. All that is stagey is put down as a remnant of the past. Is this quite fair? Were there no



realistic actors in the past? "Bannister," wrote an eye-witness, "as handsome in his age as in his youth, was one who could make you forget you were looking at a play. He was more than an actor by seeming to be no actor at all." The character of "Walter the Carpenter" in the "Children of the Wood," then and for a long time afterwards a favourite drama with our forefathers, was one of the most homely nature, and Bannister's popularity in it as a natural actor was unbounded.

In the same August came Robert William Elliston. When his name was announced the theatre was at once besieged. Places were readily booked, and a crowded audience assembled to see Elliston's impersonation of his original character, the "Duke Aranza" in the "Honeymoon." With a Glasgow audience he at once ingratiated himself. As an actor he was thoroughly original. "He," wrote a local critic, "can bid defiance to either Cooke or Kemble in a certain number of characters. There was a magic in his voice which could sway any audience in public or in private to his pleasure." He made many friends during his Glasgow engagement. As to his social life, his character was summed up in one sentence—"He was a capital minister spoiled."

Of the two next stars who visited Queen Street in 1808, I have myself a childish recollection as they appeared in their old age. The first of these was Charles Mayne Young. He opened on January 8th, 1808, as "Beverley" in the "Gamester," to the "Stukely" of Cooke.

Long after the old actor had retired I used, as a



very small boy, frequently to see him on horseback cantering up and down the Clapham Road in all weathers; bluff and hardy to the last. As I write these words the face of the white-haired veteran rises again to my memory out of the forty years past. What a face! What magnificent features! The prominent but well-shaped nose, the firm compressed lip, "an eye like Mars to threaten and command; a station like the herald Mercury new lighted on a heaven-kissing hill."

Young was a mannerist. "He too often," wrote Leigh Hunt, "plays the orator in his soliloquies and the philosopher in his passionate encounters." "I had never seen Young act," said Edmund Kean. "Every one told me he could not hold a farthing rushlight to me, but he can. He is an actor; and though I flatter myself that he could not act 'Othello' as I do, yet what chance have I in 'Iago' after him, with his personal advantages and his d——d musical voice? Young is not only an actor such as I did not dream him to have been, but he is a gentleman."

Almost immediately after Young left came the famous Richard Jones. He opened in "Puff" in the "Critic," and in "Love Laughs at Locksmiths." Of this comedian in his old age I have, too, likewise a childish recollection. I can remember one day when standing in the doorway of a shop in Cheapside, held by the hand by my father, I saw an eccentric-looking, brisk old gentleman pass. He wore at that time (1846) the irrepressible blue frock-coat, short-waisted and tightly buttoned; light fawn-coloured, gaiter-cut trousers, narrow and tightly strapped; and his still

handsome features were surmounted by a low-crowned hat, curled up at the side brims like a bishop's. As he jauntily made his way through the crowd, swinging a light Malacca cane, stopping every now and then to look into the windows of the shops, my father pointed him out to me, and said, "There goes Richard Jones. Why, he must be now nearly seventy." He died seven years afterwards, at the age of seventy-four. As a comedian Jones was perhaps the best of his day. He was good enough, at least, for the late Charles Mathews to take him for his model. But old Glasgow stagers, who thirty years ago could say they had seen the acting of both, used to say that, however good Jones was, Mathews was a great deal better.



CHAPTER VII.

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ON the 12th August, 1809, the following advertisement appeared in the *Herald* and *Courier*:—

“To be Sold, within the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, upon Wednesday, the 16th August current, at Eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the whole Movable Scenery, Dresses, Decorations, and Furniture, which belonged to Mr. Beaumont, the late manager.”

The following January (1810) saw the theatre under the new management of Messrs. Bartley and Trueman, With the New Year, 1812, the theatre was reopened under the management of Mr. Montgomerie. On January the 27th came down for the first time Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kemble. Kemble, who was then over forty years of age, had but just emerged in London from a fairly capable walking gentleman into a light comedian and tragedian, and followed closely in the mannerisms of his brother. His appearance at once ingratiated him with his Queen Street audience. His hero-face, his mellow and manly voice, and his breadth of style and culture, all won for him a favourable reception. He opened as Hamlet, which was regarded as a careful and classical performance, but in light comedy he was pronounced unrivalled.

In Mrs. Charles Kemble, the audience were intro-

duced to a very pretty woman, whose good looks were thought to atone for her mediocre acting. She played "Ophelia" to her husband's "Hamlet," "Donna Violante" to his "Don Felix" ("The Wonder"), "Juliana" to his Duke ("Honeymoon"), and "Julia" to his "Captain Absolute," and appeared also in a round of dramas, which were served up as last pieces. She is described by a contemporary as a delightful dark-eyed woman, whose motion was itself music, ere her voice was heard. In melodrama, or any piece in which a pretty face and graceful form were needed, she held her audience spell bound.

Munden made his *début* almost immediately afterwards on March 12th, in the then comparatively new comedy of the "Road to Ruin." He wound up his engagement with "Crack," in the "Turnpike Gate," a favourite character subsequently with Mr. J. H. Alexander, whose conception of the part was formed on that of the former comedian.

An advertisement announcing that the theatre was again "To Let" appeared in the *Herald* and *Courier* about the end of August, 1812, and was destined to be seed which was to bring forth good fruit. It was the means of introducing to Glasgow William Charles Macready. "The Glasgow and Dumfries Theatres," so he tells us in his *Reminiscences*, "were now to be let, and my father decided on trying his fortune with them. He brought with him his Newcastle company; new scenery was provided, the theatre was burnished up, and everything which the proprietors could do was done to aid the new management and help to restore the fortunes of the now unfortunate playhouse."

Macready had, even young as he was, made some slight name. Three years before, when only seventeen years old, he had played "Romeo" very successfully. He had also acted "Beverley" in "The Gamester" and "Young Norval" to the "Mrs. Beverley" and "Lady Randolph" of Mrs. Siddons, and the great actress herself had stood at the side wings and applauded him loudly, exclaiming, "Bravo, sir, bravo;" but when he came to Glasgow his name had "yet to become one to conjure by." Although to the general public at this time young Macready was unknown, not a few of the more experienced playgoers had heard of his success in the English provincial cities, and were prepared to give the young aspirant an encouraging greeting. On that spring evening, May 3rd, 1813, when young Mr. "M'Ready," as the printers announced him, was to make his *début* there was a "fair appearance in pit, boxes, and gallery." Macready, it was announced, would make his first bow in the comedy of "The Wonder," and play "Don Felix" to the "Lissardo" of his father and the "Violante" of a Mrs. Garrick, a lady who was by marriage related to the great actor.

"On my father's remark," Macready writes, "to one of the old servants of the theatre that the house was very good. 'Aye, but,' he replied, 'it will be better when (after a pause pointing to me) his honour there comes out.'" His prediction was fulfilled when the future great tragedian—then but a mere stripling—made his bow before a Glasgow audience as "Hamlet." In Macready's reminiscences he states, "It was in the tragedy of 'Hamlet' I made my first bow before a

Glasgow audience." The advertisement in the journals, however, announced that on May 3rd Mr. Macready would appear in "The Wonder" with the cast I have quoted. The newspapers of that date took no notice of the performance, and it is now impossible to state where the mistake arose. "That audience," Macready writes, "I remember with peculiar satisfaction—the knots of play-goers that used to club together in the two corners of the pit, and with their murmurs of approval every now and then encouraged the young actor with the belief that they gave their thoughts to what was going on before them, were calculated to give confidence to his attempt, and made him feel that what he did was examined and scrutinised by a deliberate judgment."

In the course of the season, it appears that Macready, besides repeating various characters in his list, added to them "Doricourt," in "The Belle's Stratagem;" "Puff," in "The Critic;" "Young Marlow," in "She Stoops to Conquer;" and "Marc Antony," for the first time.

"In this splendid theatre," continues the tragedian, "which was the largest out of the metropolis, I derived benefit from the necessity I was under of more careful study and practice, and the improvement I made was perceptible to me." "On one occasion," he writes, "I had to task my powers of memory. The new play by Morton, called 'Education,' had been commenced with the usual parade of a 'novelty,' and the part of 'Count Villars,' a French refugee, acted by Charles Young in London, had been cast to one of the best actors in my father's company, of the name of Grant.

He had read his part at every rehearsal, and held it in his hand on the morning of the play, but before the rehearsal was ended he disappeared, and sent word to the theatre that he was too ill to act that night. The dismay was great, and there was much perplexity as to the measures to be adopted. I was sent for by my father to decide on the change in the pieces to be made, but as this in theatres is regarded as a last resource, and always prejudicial, I asked for the book, and determined if I could not perfect myself in the words of the part to read it rather than allow the play to be changed. It was two o'clock in the day. I ran through the scenes at rehearsal, and, going home, shut myself up to work at my task. An explanation was given to the audience of the reason of the change in the cast, and I had the satisfaction of getting through the undertaking without missing one single word in the acting."

Shortly after the elder Macready commenced management, he determined on the production of a spectacle. It was one which was made memorable for many a year after its producer slept with his fathers. This was the melodrama of "Aladdin," which had been recently brought out at Covent Garden. At Glasgow, no expense in the way of scenic decoration, supernumeraries, Chinese costumes, or stage effects was spared, and the result was a complete triumph. It had been produced shortly before young Macready undertook the character of "Count Villars," "And," writes Macready, "at a very short notice, not to stop the production of the romance of 'Aladdin.' I undertook in it the part of the

Magician, previously cast to Grant, and by making something of a character of it, added to the effect of the piece." Subsequently Macready played "Aladdin."

At Glasgow during this year Macready, Sen., produced "Richard II.," but succeeded only in obtaining the applause of very scanty audiences. The season closed on August 16th with "The Belle's Stratagem," Macready playing "Doricourt."

A misunderstanding with the proprietors of the theatre compelled Macready to abridge the season. Betty was again upon the Glasgow boards, and young Macready, in order "to supply his father with funds, which," as he tells us, "were much needed," proposed to study two characters in Betty's pieces. One was in a play by Dimond called "Charles's Oak," in which Macready played "Wyndham," and Betty "King Charles." The other was "King Edward the Fourth," in Franklin's tragedy of "The Earl of Warwick," Betty undertaking the title-role. "It was," says Macready, "my first trial of strength with a player of celebrity, and," he modestly adds, "in it I can bear testimony to the very clever acting of my opponent. I did my best with the two subordinate parts, and lost no ground in public estimation by the venture."

The irritability which so embittered Macready subsequently in the memory of many a subordinate *confrere* appears to have been hereditary, for he significantly winds up this account of his first visit to Glasgow with "Unhappily my father's temper one evening was less within control than usual, and very angry and bitter words after we had returned to our



lodgings" (in Hutcheson Street) "made a severance between us, and we parted for the night with the understanding we were not again to occupy the same house. I was left with a portion of the company to act another week in Glasgow."

In 1815, the theatre having in the interim been let to Mr. Harry Johnstone, Macready came again to Glasgow—this time as a star. He repeated his principal characters to good houses; but the first appearance of Edmund Kean being announced over his head, and at greatly advanced prices—Kean himself being paid one hundred pounds per night—affected the business. Notwithstanding, Macready's engagement was very satisfactory, and, as events shortly afterwards proved, in more respects than one. It was in Queen Street during this engagement that Macready was destined to meet his future wife. "A pretty little girl," writes Mr. Macready, "about nine years of age, was sent on at a very short notice to act the part of one of the children in Dimond's pleasant farce of 'The Hunter of the Alps.' She was imperfect in the words she had to speak, having had no time to learn them. Not being aware of this, I scolded her on coming off the stage for her neglect, which I was afterwards sorry for, as it cost her many tears. In later life this incident was recalled to me in a very unexpected manner." Five years afterwards (in 1819) Macready went to act at Aberdeen. "I reached," he writes, "Aberdeen about noon, where I saw my name announced in the playbills for 'Richard the Third.' Two young girls were walking up and down the stage, apparently waiting for the business of the

morning to begin. One, the manager's daughter, was a common looking person; the other, plainly but neatly dressed, was distinguishable for a peculiar expression of intelligence and sprightly gentleness. She rehearsed with great propriety 'the Prince of Wales,' and was introduced to me as my 'Virginia' for the next night's play. Just developing into womanhood, her age would have been guessed more, but she had not reached fifteen. There was a native grace in her deportment and every movement; and never were innocence and sensibility more sweetly personified than in her mild looks and eyes—as 'Virginia'—streaming with unbidden tears. I soon learned her little history. She was the support of her family, and was the same little girl whom I had rebuked some years before for supposed inattention at the Glasgow theatre." Four years afterwards, in 1823, he was married to the same little lady, Miss Catherine Atkins. It was on both sides a marriage of love, and for thirty-two years no couple could have been more devoted to each other than Macready and his beloved wife. It is of her he writes:—"The web of life is of a mingled yarn, and for the predominance of good in mine mainly attributable to the dear partner of its trials, I can never think without emotion of the deepest gratitude." Macready's engagements from time to time in Glasgow extended over the space of 35 years, and with most of them his banker's account steadily improved. On one occasion, however, his engagement was a failure. His diary of February 22nd records:—"Glasgow, Feb. 22.—Acted 'Hamlet' really well, but under strange feelings of fretfulness and

mortification. I sent for Mr. Hield, the acting manager, and asked him 'what the house was.' He told me, 'But middling yet.' I was quite cast down. I do not know when I have in my professional life suffered so much from mortification. I tried to rally, and acted as well as I could. Mr. Miller came and paid me £50 for to-morrow night." The theatre was the Adelphi. Mr. Miller also mentions this engagement. "One night," writes Miller, "when I took Mr. Macready the returns of the house (Mr. M.'s arrangement with me was £50 per night certain, and share after £100, consequently it was necessary that he should know the receipts) I was particular in directing his attention to the different items. 'Don't trouble yourself, Mr. Miller, the sum total is all I wish to know. I have every confidence in your integrity. I have seldom encountered unprincipled managers, and when I do, whatever I suspect, I generally keep to myself. However, upon a few occasions, I have had some little altercations. I was once playing an engagement at Carlisle. My father built the theatre there, consequently I have a pretty good idea of what the house contains. The returns of the house one evening were brought me. "This is not correct, sir," I said to the manager, whom you and I, Miller, know pretty well. "I made inquiries," replied the manager, "and they persist in saying that it is correct. There can be no mistake. My own relations take the money, sir, and if they wrong us we must put up with it." "We!" I answered; "*you* may, Mr. —, but I'll be d—d if I do."

However, Macready went on to say, 'the parties were suffered to exult in their villany, and no further notice was taken by me. Some time afterwards I was waited upon by the manager alluded to—who was a Glasgow one—"Have you a few nights to spare, sir?" he asked. "I have." "I think two or three nights might be spent advantageously at Dumfries." "Certainly." "Shall I go," said the manager, "and make arrangements there?" "Do your relations *still* take the money, Mr. —?" "I have made no other arrangement," replied the manager. "Then," I retorted, "you may go by yourself; you don't get me there."'"

Macready was, despite of his cold cynicism, at times singularly generous; and Miller records that on one occasion during this engagement he returned him £45 out of the night's receipts, in order to compensate the unfortunate showman manager for his losses.

Macready's last appearance in Glasgow was on September 30th, 1850, at Dunlop Street. "Acted 'Virgilius,'" so he writes. "Called and tried to say the few words I had prepared. I could not; so improvised something which led me into the current of the short speech intended. It is strange I cannot find words or thoughts at the moment they are needed. The audience seemed satisfied with what I said. Glasgow is ended! Good Glasgow!"

As an actor in some characters Macready took a stand inferior to none. There was in his impersonations, however, not so much of genius as

of marked individual talent. In flexibility of talent and range of intellectual sympathy, Macready, it was said, was a better actor even than Kean. All attempts at impersonation in modern plays were with the latter, failures. All Macready's original characters—"Orestes," "William Tell," "Rob Roy," "Gisippus," "Virginius," "Claude Melnotte," and last, though not least, "Richelieu"—he made his own, and in them has been found to be unapproachable. As a man, Macready, though deeply imbued with religious principles, was proud and overbearing to his inferiors. "Stand further off, sir!" he once said at rehearsal to an American actor who was playing "Rosencrantz" to the tragedian's "Hamlet." "Would you shake hands, sir, with your 'Hamlet?'" "I don't know," said the other; "I do with my *President*." As to the virtues of social life, nothing in Macready was wanting. Affectionate to his friends and relatives even to a fault, generous and hospitable, very charitable to the poor; at once a scholar and a courtly gentleman, he was also one whose refined morality was pioneer to that reform both before and behind the curtain, which in later years has made itself known, more especially in the management of Phelps, the Keans, and last, but not least, to him to whom this little work is affectionately inscribed.



CHAPTER VIII.

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IN 1814, the Queen Street Theatre was under the management of Harry Johnstone, a man who, since he had first appeared in Glasgow, had won the everlasting good-will of the general public for having stood up in vindication of a husband's rights, even to the length of thrashing H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. England's future George the Fourth had pressed his gallantries so far on Mrs. Johnstone (an indifferent actress but a pretty woman) as to force himself into that lady's dressing-room behind the scenes at Drury Lane. Johnstone stealthily followed the Prince and horsewhipped him there and then. The outraged husband was given into custody, but escaped; he hid himself in an obscure lodging till the hue and cry had subsided, and then, disguised as an old soldier, left London and made his way on foot to Newcastle. Subsequently he became manager of a circuit; made a failure as director of the Theatre Royal, Dublin, came over to Glasgow, and managed Queen Street for a year. He afterwards fell into poverty, lived on the charity of his brother actors, died at a very advanced age, and was buried in Lambeth, the suburb which had been his refuge when he fled from the wrath of the de-

feated heir apparent. A twelvemonth after the Drury Lane escapade, however, Mrs. Johnstone figured in the divorce Court, the co-respondent being the celebrated orator and Deputy Master of the Rolls, Richard Curran. He ran away from the country to evade the process of the Court, and was accordingly proclaimed an outlaw.

To Johnstone, Glasgow is indebted for the introduction of Edmund Kean. Monday, the 20th March, 1815, saw the first appearance of the great actor in Queen Street. The prices of admission were:—Boxes, 7s.; pit, 5s.; lower gallery, 3s.; upper gallery, 2s. "We shall never forget," writes an eyewitness, "the terrific squeeze we had in forcing ourselves into the pit on the evening of Mr. Kean's first appearance in Glasgow." The boxes had all been taken weeks before, and even temporary boxes were erected on the stage. All the professors of the University and the literati of Edinburgh, including Francis Jeffrey, were present. Glasgow was in an uproar of excitement. Crowds from all the surrounding districts flooded the city. Not a bed in a house, private or public, was to be obtained. The theatre doors were besieged for hours before they were opened. Queen Street was literally blocked by the mass of people eager for admittance. When at last the portals were opened, a crush, which was mingled with shouts, cheers, and shrieks, ensued. Men fought, women fainted, and were carried fainting in some instances into the theatre, unable to get out of the dense multitude.

In April Kean again flashed with his wonted

brilliancy and success upon Glasgow audiences, playing "Richard," "Othello," "Sir Giles," "Romeo," "Penruddock" ("Wheel of Fortune"), and "Zanga" in "The Revenge." On his next visit in 1820 his reputation (socially speaking) was under a cloud. An action, in which Kean figured as co-respondent, had been brought by Alderman Cox, and damages had been awarded to the "injured" husband, who, it was said, had, with his wife, arranged the whole affair for the purpose of extorting handsome damages. The press had denounced Kean in the most ferocious terms, and called upon the public to drive him from the stage. The public submitted cheerfully to be hounded on, and now greeted him with howls and hisses whenever and wherever he appeared. He came down to seek rest and quiet at Bute Cottage, Rothesay, which he had purchased a few years before. An engagement in Queen Street was offered him, and an arrangement was made for Kean to play for a month respectively at Glasgow, Greenock, Ayr, and Kilmarnock. Kean was announced to open a six-nights' engagement in Glasgow as "Richard." He made his bow to a house crowded with men and boys. No female was to be seen. The uproar commenced with Kean's entrance, and not a word of the play would the audience allow to be heard. The tragedy was acted off simply in dumb show. "Othello," the next night, fared no better. "Brutus" was the play for Wednesday, and the audience, consisting solely of the male sex, condescended to give the tragedian a respectful hearing. Responding to the vociferous cheering, which greeted the fall of the curtain, Kean came forward and said :—



"Ladies and gentlemen,—When I used to visit this city it was always a rich harvest to me, but this time there has been a great falling off. That, I suppose, is owing to a certain event which has already cost me £999 more than it was worth. I am going to America—(cries of 'No, no')—to perform again. If I ever return to this country I shall certainly pay you a visit; for old kindnesses I never forget. For the present I bid you all respectfully—Farewell."

Kean started next morning from the Caledonian Hotel, where he had been staying, and went down by the steamer to Greenock. The Glasgow manager, accompanied by Sheridan Knowles, arrived in the afternoon, and Kean, only partially sober, went down to the theatre. Kean dressed himself at the hotel—"the White Hart"—where he was stopping, and came down to the theatre wrapped in his fur cloak to cover his stage costume. Howling and hissing and cat-calls greeted him here, as they had done at Glasgow, and at the end of the first scene, in his stage dress, concealed by his cloak, he left the theatre. He went to his rooms at the White Hart, threw himself on a sofa and refused to stir. Remonstrance and persuasion proving fruitless, his valet left him, locking the door on his master. Kean heard the ominous click; made at once for the window, leapt from it, made his way to a water-side tavern, from which, accompanied by a well-known property man (Mr. Mackintosh), he, still habited in his "Richard" dress, set out in an open boat for Rothesay, where he arrived next morning at four o'clock, and four hours afterwards reached his retreat, Bute Cottage.

His engagement at Ayr ended most satisfactorily. Ladies of the highest social standing, as well as gentlemen, filled the theatre. The sight of the house and the cordial greeting awarded him so gratified and inspired the tragedian that his acting, it was said, was never better than it was as "Richard" that night.

In the September of 1824 Glasgow was again favoured with a visit from Kean. No ladies were yet to be seen amongst the crowded audience, but he was received by the crowd, notwithstanding, with open arms. It was during his next engagement in 1827, whilst he was playing "Reuben Glenroy," in "Town and County," that Kean received intelligence that his son Charles had become an actor, and that he was to open at Drury Lane on the 1st October following. Kean had not seen his son or wife for years, and had previously declared "If Charles tries to be an actor I will cut his throat. I will be the first and last actor of the name." The announcement so affected Edmund Kean that, letting fall the letter, he sank on a sofa in the Queen Street Green Room, fairly overcome. He was unable to finish his part, and the announcement was made that Mr. Kean was taken suddenly ill. Notwithstanding his bitter feelings, however, he, next morning, sent Lee up to London to see "how the boy got on." "By the by," he said to Lee, "I'll send you up a bill here for that evening, and you will see that it is stuck up in the Green Room. Charley may be nervous if he thought I was in the audience. He doesn't know where I am. He'll see it in the Green Room, and then he'll know

I am not in the house." "With the big tears rolling down his cheeks," adds the narrator, "Kean took hold of honest John Lee's hand, and bade him farewell." He went to Hamilton to meet the mail by which Lee was to return from London, and it was in the former place Kean received the news that Charles had made a fairly successful *début*.

In 1828 a new star was brought to Glasgow. This was no other than young Mr. Kean. With his father Charles had not held intercourse for some time, for the son had resented Kean's insult to Mrs. Kean, Sen., in having attached himself to a disreputable companion. This "lady" was then living with the elder Kean in Bute.

After the first night, the business attendant on the engagement with young Kean declined, and the manager hit on a scheme to improve it. He wrote to Edmund Kean, who had come back from America—a wreck of his former self; bloated and feeble. He succeeded in engaging him to come to Glasgow and play for one night, taking care not to hint that it was for Charles' benefit, and that sire and son were to play together. Of this fact the elder Kean knew nothing until he came into the theatre and saw the bill. "Kean," writes Lee, "got into a terrible passion upon making the discovery, and wanted to leave the house; but he was urged not to show spite against his own son, and persuaded to go on." The play was the tragedy of "Brutus"—"Brutus" by Mr. Kean; "Titus," his son, Mr. Charles Kean. The house was the largest ever seen in the Glasgow Theatre Royal. No less than 250 persons were accommodated with seats

in the wings, and on the stage itself. There was no change of scene, owing to the intrusion of so many of the public, and the piece was literally played from beginning to end in a circle on the centre of the stage.

Except when on the stage together, father and son never met or recognised one another. Both were called for at the fall of the curtain, but Kean would not go on. The afterpiece was "The Hunter of the Alps," "Felix" by Mr. Charles Kean. Whilst the latter was waiting at the wing, his father passed by on his way to go out. Halting for a moment, the elder Kean simply said, "I hope to see you, Charles, at Bute to-morrow. There will be a crust of bread and cheese for you there." Charles politely answered, "Thank you, father." So ended the interview. Instead of going to Bute, Kean went next day to Belfast.

Five years afterwards sire and son met again. It was on the boards of Covent Garden Theatre. Kean played "Othello;" Charles, "Iago;" and Miss Ellen Tree (afterwards Mrs. Charles Kean), "Desdemona." When Charles came on the scene the elder Kean advanced towards him, cast off for the nonce the actor, and became the kind father. All went well until in the third act he came to the celebrated exclamation, "Villain!" &c. On that word Kean's voice broke up into a falsetto. He paused a second or two, his voice gradually sank into an inarticulate whisper, after which his head gradually fell on his son's shoulder. "Get me off, Charles," he gasped; "I'm dying. Speak to them

for me." Charles led him off the stage. He was conveyed to Richmond. Two months afterwards, an hour before he died (on the midnight of 13th May, 1833) he sprang out of bed, exclaiming, "A horse, a horse: my kingdom for a horse," and his last words were the dying words of "Octavian" in the "Foundling of the Forest," "Farewell, Flo—Floranthe." Charles was in an adjoining room. The only persons present when Kean died were Mr. Lee and the doctor.

In the June of the year 1833 the house, furniture, books, &c., belonging to the late Edmund Kean at Bute came to the hammer. Amongst the tragedian's papers were found the following lines, which there is every reason to believe were penned by him :—

Thou Tyrant Death ! that doth abuse that power  
 But lent thee by the Great Creator's hand ;  
 The virtuous—wicked—fall in the same hour,  
 Destined all to thy express commands.

Canst thou not, Tyrant, e'er consistent be ?  
 Why leave the child to mourn a Mother's death ?  
 In taking all I loved, why not take me  
 To sigh my last with her who gave me breath ?

One bliss is left above thy firm control,  
 While Heaven destines me thus to linger here—  
 To indulge the filial duties of my soul,  
 And daily o'er my Parent drop a tear.

The next great event of Johnstone's season as manager was the engagement of Miss O'Neil. An unexpected *furore* took place. It was an "O.P." riot. Johnstone had, as in the case of Kean's engagement, raised the prices. The actress was announced

to open on the 21st August, 1818, as "Belvidera" in "Venice Preserved." When the curtain rose a cry resounded from all parts of the house of "O.P.!!!" (old prices). A thousand bellowing tongues took up the shout. It was then discovered by the management that copies of the following handbill had been distributed:—"Johnstone, in one week last season during the engagement of Mr. Kean, in consequence of raising prices of admission, cleared £2,000. It is presumed that the public of Glasgow will not submit to a repetition of a like imposition." The tumult increased. Johnstone, whenever he entered, was loudly hissed, but in the end gained the day. Miss O'Neil's appearance seemed to act like a spell, under which the ringleaders of the riot found themselves bound to silence. She played "Jane Shore" the following night, and by the press was declared to be "the finest we have ever seen." Miss O'Neil appeared in Glasgow, in engagements up till 1819, when she married, left the stage, became, on her husband being knighted, Lady Beecher, and died, nineteen years ago, at the age of 81.

Following a brief engagement with Lucius Junius Brutus Booth (Kean's counterpart) and that of "Mathews' At Home," came the announcement that on the 18th September, 1818, the "Grand Crystal Lustre of the front Roof of the Theatre, the largest of any of that time in Scotland, will, in place of the Wicks and the Candles and the Oil Lamps, be *Illuminated with Sparkling Gas.*" Every seat in the boxes up to the double and triple tier was at once engaged, the spacious pit was crammed to suffocation,

the first, second, and third galleries had not an inch of standing room to spare. Gas never till then had been seen or heard of in any theatre (so ran the advertisement) in this kingdom. The house presented a most brilliant appearance. Nearly every citizen of wealth or repute was present with his family. The signal was given. The green curtain of the stage was raised. Then the band struck up the National anthem, the audience joining in the chorus. The gas, as if by magic, made its first "evolutions," to the astonishment of all, "leaving some of them," adds the writer, "to fancy that they had been ushered into a new world—a perfect Elysium on earth."

The programme that night consisted of Mozart's "Don Giovanni," by a company of Italian artistes under the baton of Mr. John Corri, father of the late Henry Corri, and grandfather of Miss Kathleen Corri (Mrs. Lord), late of the Central Hotel.



CHAPTER IX.

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IT may surprise many to learn that "Rob Roy" was produced first in *Glasgow*, nine months before it was played at Edinburgh. The date of its production at Queen Street was June 10th, 1818, on the occasion of the benefit of Mr. W. H. Murray, of Edinburgh. Murray played "the Bailie" to the "Rob" of Mr. Yates (afterwards manager of the London Adelphi, and father of the present editor of the *World*), and a Mrs. Eyre played "Helen." No notice was taken of the performance by the local journals; but it enjoyed the rather (at that time) lengthened run of four successive nights.

At the Perth Theatre on the 18th June, 1818, "Rob Roy Macgregor, or Auld Lang Syne," was performed, with Mr. Mackay as "the Bailie," for the first time. It was next played in Dundee, with Mackay once more as "the Bailie." The "Dougal" of Williams at Perth and Dundee is said never to have been equalled. Mr. Mackay played "the Bailie" for the first time in Glasgow in the August of 1819. The first production of "Rob Roy" in Edinburgh was on February 15th, 1819, with Hamerton as "Rob;" "the Bailie," Mackay; "Captain Thornton," W. H. Murray; "Francis," Benson; "Rashleigh," J.



H. Alexander; "Diana," Miss M'Alpine; and "Helen," Mrs. Renaud.

The performance of the piece in Glasgow which probably will be most vividly remembered was the revival of the play at the old Prince's Theatre in West Nile Street, on February 4th, 1852:—

Rob Roy, . . . . .	Mr. Edmund Glover.
Helen Macgregor, . . . . .	Mrs. Archbold.
Rashleigh Osbaldistone, . . . . .	Mr. J. Silver.
Francis Osbaldistone, . . . . .	Henry Haigh.

(Announced as a young tenor who had just entered the profession).

Diana Vernon, . . . . .	Miss Josephine Manners.
Owen, . . . . .	Mr. C. E. Marshall.
Captain Thornton, . . . . .	Mr. W. Morgan.

(First husband to the present Mrs. J. B. Howard).

Dougal, . . . . .	Mr. Watt.
Sir Frederick Vernon, . . . . .	Mr. C. G. Houghton.
Major Galbraith, . . . . .	Mr. W. H. Murray.
Bailie Nicol Jarvie (1,134th time), . . . . .	Mr. Mackay.
M'Stewart, . . . . .	David Fisher.

Subsequently, when the piece was revived a few years afterwards, Powrie played "Rob;" Miss Cleaver, "Helen;" George Webster, "the Bailie;" Lloyd, "Galbraith;" Vivash, "the Dougal;" Ashley, "Rashleigh;" Miss Fanny Josepchs, "Diana;" and Hamblin for many years afterwards, the stock "Francis."

Some half-a-dozen versions of the novel have been from time to time staged in London and elsewhere, but none have approached either in excellence, stage contrivance, or popularity, that of Peacock.

"Robs" have been found in every tragedian and actor manager from Macready, the London original,

to Charles Kemble downwards ; but of the Scottish actors in the olden time, Corbett Ryder, who played it shortly after the production of the play in Perth, is said to have been the best.

To our present class of old playgoers the "Rob" of Glover and of Powrie will be the most familiar. Glover's conception of the character was perhaps the most original. It was that of a more homely type, abounding in strongly effective traits ; never failing in his impersonation of "the bold outlaw" to give glimpses here and there that "Rob" was a man strongly attached to wife, weans, clan, and dear old Scotland. Powrie was indebted for his idea of the outlaw to Mr. Langley, an excellent actor in Mr. Alexander's company, and for ten years the highly esteemed manager of the Dundee Theatre. Mr. Langley's acting of the part was based on that of Corbett Ryder. Powrie, who was a Dundee man, was at the time (forty years ago) a promising amateur, and Mr. Langley encouraged him by allowing him occasionally to act in his theatre. Powrie's embodiment was from first to last that of the bold and romantic outlaw. With Anderson, the "Wizard of the North," the part was also a great favourite, and after the burning of the City Theatre on the Green, he opened in the part at "Covent Garden," of which theatre he was manager, and which likewise was burned to the ground, shortly after he had entered on the management. The late Mr. M'Neill, who married a daughter of Ryder, gave also an admirable picture of "Rob." The stage has at present no "Rob" who can approach that of Mr. J. B. Howard. All

local playgoers remember every "Rob" of note, and also the actor of nearly every other character in the drama, from "the Bailie" to "Captain Thornton." What man, woman, or child who saw it will ever forget the "Bailie" of Mackay who, in the broadest situations, even when wielding the red-hot poker, never forgot that Nicol Jarvie was a magistrate, and the son of a deacon. He was, we are told, intensely humorous, never vulgar, always amusing, and not a vestige of a buffoon. Ever realistic, never otherwise than refined, he immortalised the part.

Gourlay, who played it some years afterwards, was an imitator of Mackay, quaint, dry, and funny; but his "Bailie" was wanting in the delicacy of touch, of his model. George Webster, J. H. Alexander, Bruce Norton, all tried it; and Mr. James Houston displays a genuine appreciation of the part. The nearest approach, however, to Scott's "Bailie" that I remember to have seen, and I only know Mackay's by hearsay, was the late Mr. William Campbell's, who identified his name with the character in Glasgow some twenty years back, and who almost invariably played it to the "Rob" of Powrie. Campbell was one of the only two persons who saw Tom Powrie die.

The earliest "Rashleigh" of note was Mr. J. H. Alexander, who played it at Edinburgh. Then came Mr. James Aitken, father to Mrs. Bunten. But to old Dunlop Street playgoers "Silver" was *the* "Rashleigh." Look, gesture—everything conveyed the idea of the cunning, cruel, and vindictive plotter. "Silver" was one of the best "villains" that trod Dunlop Street stage. He was the "black-a-vised"

murderer to the life. And yet with what genuine human relentings he played "Hubert" in "King John!" The last "Rashleigh" who appeared in Dunlop Street was Mr. Frank Allan, son-in-law to Mr. Langley, a gentleman who in his own name—that of Kilpack—officiated as acting manager at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, where he died about two years ago. Out of the many "Rashleighs" it has been our good fortune to witness, including that of Mr. R. H. Wyndham, none gave so good all-round a portraiture as Mr. A. Lindsay who played it to the "Rob" of Mr. Henry Talbot some years ago at the Gaiety.

In the ranks of the "Major Galbraiths," no one was found so fit to command as the veteran, the late "Old Lloyd." His conception of the character was founded on that of W. H. Murray's, who soon threw up the English "Captain" for the more important part of "the Major."

Various actresses have identified themselves with "Helen," and amongst their names are those of Mrs. Egerton, Mrs. Renaud, Mrs. Ternan, Mrs. Glover, Miss Cleaver, Miss Nicol (the original), Miss Marriott, Mrs. R. H. Wyndham, Miss Rose Leclerq, and Mrs. J. B. Howard; but probably no one of these ever realised the more ferocious side of the character better than does Miss Julia Seaman. Her commanding presence and extraordinary powerful voice would have inspired awe even to "Rob" himself. "Owen" never attained greater prominence than it did in the artistic hands of the late Mr. Fitzroy.

Amongst the most notable of the "Francis'" was

Mr. Sims Reeves. As Mr. J. S. Reeves he played the part at Miller's Adelphi. A local critic of the day recorded—"He (Mr. Reeves) seems to have something of the same antipathy to steel as that described of James VI. When he ought to have drawn his sword he had none to draw, and when he dared 'Rashleigh' to combat he coolly walked off the stage to provide himself with a claymore." As to costume, the play has undergone as many changes as there are checks in the tartan. In 1845, a local critic, describing the production of the piece in Dunlop Street and at Miller's Adelphi, says:—"But at both the theatres the general appearance of all the characters must have been, to say the least of it, startling. Sir Frederick Vernon was dressed as 'Hamlet;' at Miller's three distinct checks were seen on one dress; some of the Highlanders were dressed as English peasants, and 'Helen' was attended by a faithful servitor in a modern 'pot' hat and velveteen breeches."

"Rob Roy" has been played little in comparison with "Guy Mannering." "Rob" has seldom made its appearance except on some special occasion, and in nine cases out of ten it has been as a special spectacle. Up to the period of the Glover dynasty it was seldom seen in Glasgow, probably owing to the uninterrupted run of stars and the difficulty attending its production in the way of music, the drilling of supers, &c. "Guy Mannering," on the other hand, has grown grey in its service on the Glasgow boards. As the journals of seventy years ago took little or no notice (even by adver-

tisement) of dramatic entertainments, it is almost impossible now to fix with any certainty the exact date when Terry's adaptation was first presented to the Glasgow footlights; but it would probably be anterior to "Rob Roy," and most likely almost immediately succeeding its production at Edinburgh, where Murray introduced it on February 25th, 1817, more than eleven months after it had made its *début* at Covent Garden.

In Glasgow the play has always been a favourite. Year after year it was played with George Webster as "Dandie," for which character it seemed as if nature had specially formed him. It was a rough, bold, and strong, if not a very artistic bit of acting. With the "Dominie" will always be associated the revered name of Mackay, and prominent amongst his successors, that of Mr. Fitzroy, who invariably received for a quiet and pathetic rendering of it a cordial greeting. Liston's "Dominie" was said to have been far better than his "Bailie."

Every light comedian, from Mr. Harcourt Bland downwards, has had his name associated with "Colonel Mannering." For some years Mr. Ashley played it to the "Dirk Hatteraick" by turns of Vivash and Silver. Danvers, the father of Mr. Ramsay Danvers, was "Gilbert Glossin." The "Megs" have been numerous, none of course equalling that of Miss Cushman, who played it at Miller's Adelphi. In 1849 and on several other occasions Edmund Glover played "Meg" with his usual success. The strongest cast (vocally) ever seen in Glasgow was on September 6th, 1852, with the

Pyne-Harrison troupe, with Louisa Pyne as "Julia," Harrison as "Bertram," and H. Corri as "Dandie."

When Dunlop Street was reopened after the fire on December 16th, 1863, "Guy Mannering" formed the opening piece, with the following cast :—

Julia Mannering, . . .	Mrs. H. Haigh.
Lucy Bertram, . . .	Miss H. Watson.
Flora, . . . . .	Miss Lizzie Wood.
Meg Merrilies, . . .	Mrs. H. Vandenhoff.
Mrs. M'Candlish, . .	Miss Lavis.
Colonel Mannering, . .	Mr. W. Baynham.
Henry Bertram, . . .	Mr. H. Haigh.
Dominie Sampson, . .	Mr. Fitzroy.
Dandie Dinmont, . . .	{ Mr. W. Scott (Press amateurs).
Dirk Hatteraick, . . .	Mr. J. B. Howard.
Gilbert Glossin, . . .	Mr. Kendal.
Bailie Mucklethrift, . .	Mr. R. Lloyd.

Amongst the early productions of Scott's novels was the "Heart of Mid-Lothian," which was first acted in Glasgow in 1820, with the following cast :—

Dumbiedykes, . . . . .	Mr. Burns.
Duke of Argyle, . . . . .	Mr. Bromley.
Geordie Robertson, . . . . .	Mr. Buton.
Jeannie Deans, . . . . .	Mrs. Munroe.
Margery Murdockson, . . . . .	Mrs. Penman.
Madge Wildfire, . . . . .	Mrs. Baker.

This adaptation was by Dibdin. The piece had made the year before a great hit at the Surrey, and had been produced in Edinburgh on February 23rd,

1819, with Calcraft as "Staunton," Mackay as "Dumbiedykes," and J. H. Alexander as "Ratcliffe."

For some years the piece was a favourite in Glasgow, chiefly through Miss Aitken's acting of "Madge;" but as time went on it gradually sank into disuse, and probably on account of the melodies not being so catchy, it never attained the popularity of "Rob Roy" or "Guy Mannering." Several versions of the tale have been from time to time produced, and in 1863 Boucicault sent down his London version, which was followed by one by Mr. Hazlewood, and as the latter adhered more faithfully to the novel than Boucicault, although not by any means so good a piece, it became with Glaswegians a far more popular one. It had the advantage of being well staged, and Miss Marriott made an admirable "Jeannie Deans." Another play, called "The Whistler; or, the Fate of the Lily of St. Leonards," attained a short-lived popularity.

As early as 1811 Scott's "Lady of the Lake" appeared in a dramatic form—both at Covent Garden and at Edinburgh. As a spectacle, it has always been a great attraction, but it was brought into greater prominence than it had ever attained before on the accession of Edmund Glover to the management of Dunlop Street. His sturdy figure was as specially adapted as his effective delivery and acting were to the character of the outlawed chief. The first really grand revival of the piece was on the 28th April, 1856, with the following cast:—



Roderick Dhu, . . . . .	Edmund Glover.
Fitzjames, . . . . .	Powrie.
Allan Bayne, . . . . .	Fitzroy.
Douglas, . . . . .	George Webster.
Malcolm Graeme, . . . . .	George Vincent.
The Monk, . . . . .	Paumier.
Ellen, . . . . .	Mrs. M. Eburne.
Blanche, . . . . .	Miss Aitken.

To Glasgow playgoers a host of happy memories will rise at the mere mention of the list of the minor Scottish dramas. "Gilderoy," with Glover as the hero; Mackay, "Jock Muir;" and Watt, "Walter Logan." "The Warlock of the Glen," with every leading man of note in turn as "Mathew." Who does not call to mind Mackay's "Jock Howieson" in "Cramond Brig," and Glover's "James VI.," or the latter's "Edgar Ravenswood" to the "Caleb" of Mackay? Then there was also "Mary Queen of Scots," with Miss Aitken as "the Queen" and Glover as "Douglas." These dramas were all more or less adapted by W. H. Murray, and kept alive by the unrivalled acting of Mackay, who visited Glasgow now and again every year from 1819 to 1852.

At the death of Mackay his mantle in Scotch characters was supposed in Glasgow to have fallen on George Webster, and at the latter's decease descended to a great extent on the late Mr. W. Dobson, who was the last Scotch actor of note in these roles up to 1875, when Mr. James Houston and Mr. J. W. Gordon were brought to the front. Memorable among Scotch impersonations was James Aitken's "Wandering Steenie" in the drama of "The Rose of Ettrick Vale."



Old-fashioned melodrama, which was introduced first to the stage in 1802, has had its day. Its morning was bright, its noontide glorious, but its sun is setting amid anything but purple and golden clouds. Since the epoch when travelling companies became the fashion the old Scotch melodramas have found their city of refuge only in the shows. Our only chance now of having our boyish theatrical recollections revived is at Vinegar Hill during the Fair holidays. To canvas-covered Temples of the Drama—the plays have fled, and also many of the players, and some very good actors will still be found at Collins's at the Fair time. The bold bad Baron, with his basket-hilted sword, the sentimental "Crichton" hero, the white-muslined heroine, the pallid ghost, find no moated dungeon in the modern sensational drama. Instead of these dear old friends of our boyhood, the thrilling music, and the soul-harrowing scenes, we have some insipid masher in evening dress, who consigns his hapless victim either to the colonies or a lunatic asylum—or, worse still, "slangy leg-pieces," which young Glasgow applauds to the echo, but which are too surely driving family playgoers out of the theatre.



## CHAPTER X.

IT was in the year 1819 that Macready, whilst in Glasgow, was first introduced to Sheridan Knowles by Mr. John Tait, theatrical printer, bill inspector, and kindest and best of friends to poor players. Knowles had come to Glasgow with his father about two years before this, and was then teaching elocution at his own class-rooms in Reid's Court, off the Tron-gate. Full twenty-five years and more have passed since the Necropolis received the shell of his departed spirit, yet flowers spring up in old men's memories when they call to mind the welcome visits they paid to the class-room of "Paddy" Knowles sixty years ago. Poor Knowles, though in receipt of a good income from his class fees (£2, 2s. per session), was never well off, always in a muddle, and ever sinking into poverty. Generous to a fault, he strove to relieve others beyond the measure of his means, and so became an easy prey for any rogue or lazy vagabond.

Mr. John Tait, at Knowles' request, sent Macready the M.S. of "Virginius." Macready stipulated that £400 for twenty nights should be paid for the play, and that it should be continued into the following season, which made a difference of £100 in favour of

Knowles. Twelve years afterwards Sheridan Knowles was still in Glasgow and in difficulties. Creditors were clamouring, and a rising young family making greater the demands on his resources. It was in this year he wrote the "Hunchback." Despatched to London, the play was at once accepted. Knowles' spirits, raised to the utmost, were doomed, however, to have a sudden downfall. Farren, who was rehearsing "Master Walter," was stricken with paralysis. If the play was to be produced at all it must be within a week or two. Kean, shattered in mind and body, could not undertake a fresh part; Macready declined the character. Driven to their wits' end, the managers of Covent Garden wrote to Knowles suggesting he should play the part. The dramatist consented, went up to London, played the character, and the play became the great hit of the season.

The Glasgow manager (Seymour) had reason to love "Paddy" Knowles for his generosity. Some supers on the occasion of the spectacle of "Aladdin" being played, struck for arrears of salary, and a riot was threatened. Knowles happened to be in the boxes that evening, and with a full knowledge of the circumstances which had brought the piece to an ignominious halt, he went round quietly to some of his old friends and pupils, who were also present in the boxes, and persuaded them to save the credit of the manager and the piece by taking the place, for that night only, of the recreant supers; and, Knowles heading them, the piece reached a successful termination. Knowles was, however, never thoroughly

appreciated by the public. When, at the end of the season, he came to star with Miss Ellen Tree (afterwards Mrs. Charles Kean), the curtain drew up on his own tragedy of "William Tell" with exactly seven people in the pit, six in the boxes, and thirty-five in the gallery. A Glasgow critic on the occasion wrote of Knowles :—"He *is* an actor, though perhaps not of the very highest class. He cannot for a moment measure spears with Kean, but with most other *living* performers he need not fear comparison."

In March, 1837, Sheridan Knowles came to Glasgow, again bringing with him his pupil, Miss Elphinstone, whom he shortly afterwards married. They appeared together in a round of Knowles' plays, including the "Hunchback," "The Wife," and "The Wrecker's Daughter." This engagement brought down an actor who was afterwards for many years a favourite in Dunlop Street, Mr. Paumier, a gentleman who so soon ingratiated himself with his audience that at the expiration of one month's engagement a dinner was given to him by several of the most influential of the merchant playgoers.

The 13th February, 1820, saw the *début* of James Aitken (father of Miss M. A. Aitken), as "Macbeth." Mr. Aitken, son of an upholsterer in York Street, had been a student of divinity, and was one of the first pupils of Sheridan Knowles, when the latter with his father, fresh from Belfast, first commenced to teach elocution in Glasgow. Among many professors and ministers who were present to witness the first appearance of Aitken as an actor was Dr. Chalmers and his then helper, Edward Irving. Knowles was there,

and the house was crowded for the most part with the young man's friends and fellow students. "Macbeth" was repeated nine times in the following three weeks—a great success. A month afterwards Aitken made a failure as "Richard the Third," in which he was so imperfect in the words as at length to take the book out of the prompter's hand and read them. Knowles subsequently wrote the play of "Virginius," and Aitken came from Aberdeen to play in it "Icilius," a part which had been written specially for him.

The summer season of 1825 saw, for the first time, James Aitken in the character of "Wanderin' Steenie." He played the part so well that when, two years afterwards, the original, a Mr. Denham, acted it in Glasgow he was fairly laughed off the stage. Aitken's subsequent career is but too well known. He became "walking gentleman" at Covent Garden, quarrelled with John Kemble, returned to Glasgow, taught elocution, was a splendid public reciter, gradually sank into poverty, and died in comparative obscurity. At Johnstone, at a small tavern, one Saturday evening, he was, as was his wont, collecting a trifle from the more ardent of his admirers by giving a few extracts from the part he was best known by, when he sank helplessly on the ground, sighing with a vacant stare, "Puir Steenie's dune"—words prophetic of his approaching end. This took place at Paisley on Friday, 19th September, 1845. He had been delivering his recitations there, when he fell senseless from exhaustion. They carried him to his lodging, where, two hours after they had laid him on his bed, he died.

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Misfortune had up to this period followed every attempt at management in Queen Street. The rent, which had formerly been fixed at £1,200, the directors had been compelled to reduce to £400, and even at that sum the receipts barely sufficed to pay for the gas.

In the meantime Dunlop Street had been pursuing a very questionable career, and presenting any amount of "medley" in its bill of fare, as the following copy of a programme will show :—

"Circus, Dunlop Street. On Friday and Saturday, 28th and 29th December, 1821, the performances will commence with the admired ballet dance, called 'Hurry-Scurry,' after which the very favourite Melodrama, called 'Frederick the Great,' and Horsemanship. The whole to conclude with the admired Melodramatic Burlette, called the 'Mill of Glamis.' Splendid New-Year's Harlequinade Pantomime will be produced at the Circus. Mr. Simpson (from Manchester) with his wonderful performing dogs and sagacious bear are engaged, and will shortly appear in a new grand historical bruno-canine quadrupedical melodrama."

Mr. Alexander in this year became for a short time a manager, and converted the circus in Dunlop Street into a minor theatre, securing for his opening night a popular vocalist of the day—Miss Byrne.

In 1823 the Queen Street Theatre was opened by a Mr. Taylor, from Belfast, and in the following August Mr. J. E. Byrne took the reins. In 1823 Liston made his first appearance in Glasgow as "Sam Swipes" in "Exchange no Robbery," concluding with "Bombastes Furioso." He delivered also a comic address in the character of "Lord Grizzle" in "Tom Thumb," seated on a donkey. Miss M. Tree, the

sister of Mrs. Charles Kean, came in August as Clari, and sang—she was the first who ever sang it—the evergreen “Home, Sweet Home.”

On the 4th December, Sheridan Knowles’s tragedy of “Caius Grachus” was produced for the first time. The piece narrowly escaped a failure through Mr. Seymour being grossly imperfect as the hero.

“William Tell” was next produced, in which Seymour played the hero and Aitken “Gesler.”

A fierce and powerful rival to Queen Street now appeared. A Mr. Kinloch took a theatre in Dunlop Street (then christened the Caledonian), where he produced the hit of the day, a piece founded on Pierce Egan’s “Tom and Jerry,” in which the famous Tyrone Power played “Jerry.” It was admirably mounted, and through its success Kinloch wound up his season with a clear profit of upwards of two thousand pounds.

This year (1825) brought a pronounced figure to view for the first time, Mr. J. H. Alexander, who was destined to make his name famous as at once one of the most energetic and most eccentric of theatrical men and managers. Born of respectable parents in Dunbar in 1796, after having received his education in Edinburgh, Mr. Alexander served his apprenticeship to his uncle, Mr. Proudfoot, a hosier, who carried on business at the foot of the Candleriggs. Witnessing the acting of Mr. Harry Johnstone, John Henry Alexander became infatuated with the stage, and after passing through the grub condition of Amateur, finally emerged into the butterfly state of Professional, through Mr. John Tait having introduced



him to Messrs. Trueman & Bartley, then managers of Queen Street. Under the management of Mr. Montgomerie, the successor to these gentlemen, Mr. Alexander made his first appearance before the footlights by (as a boy) giving out the performances at the end of the play, and "addressing the audiences in cases of emergency." The next season saw him at Queen Street under the Macready dynasty. A few years afterwards he was again in Scotland, and as an actor under the management of Mr. W. H. Murray he remained for some ten years. Here he married. By that strict economy which characterised his habits to the very end of his days he amassed a considerable sum out of the frugal stipend he received, and after a short curriculum passed in theatres in the North he reappeared in Glasgow as "Rashleigh Osbaldistone," when Murray brought over his Edinburgh company to play "Rob Roy."

"Alexander" now began to play everything—high tragedy, low comedy, heavies, and eccentrics. Shortly afterwards, in 1821, he became manager of the theatre in Carlisle, which he retained for twelve years, coupling with it Dumfries; and in 1822 he took the minor theatre in Dunlop Street, which had been hitherto managed by Kinloch. His open defiance of the law regarding the infringement of the patentees' rights soon gained him notoriety, and involved him in a series of litigations. In 1825, having heard that the Caledonian Theatre was in the market, he resolved to add it to his circuit. Seymour, who was then stage manager to Mr. Byrne in Queen Street, determined to forestall Alexander, and before the latter was aware of it Seymour had obtained the theatre.

Alexander came to Glasgow the day after Seymour had signed the arrangement. Discomfited but not dismayed, he matured his plans. All the premises in the building in Dunlop Street were not occupied, and what remained of them free, he resolved should be his. His eye rested on a cellar beneath. The ceiling was lofty, and the space large enough for his purpose. The proprietors of the cellar, a cotton dealer and a potato salesman, were interviewed as to their terms for vacating the premises, and at once settled with. Their goods and chattels were removed, and two days afterwards Alexander was "monarch of all he surveyed."

Seymour opened the "Caledonian" with a capital company and first-rate scenery and appointments. Alexander opened at the same time the coal cellar, which he christened "The Dominion of Fancy." Then commenced the fray. Whilst the actors on the stage above were playing "Macbeth," those on the stage below were carrying on the "Battle of the Inch." "Macbeth" was acted nearly throughout, to the tune-ful accompaniment of the shouts of soldiery, the clanging of dish covers, the clashing of swords, the braying of drums; with the fumes of blue fire every now and again rising through the chinks of the planks from the stage below to the stage above. The audience laughed, and this stimulated the wrath of the combative managers. Any new sensation will draw an audience, and the fact of getting extraordinary effects, unrehearsed, and certainly never seen before, drew large audiences.

The rival managers now appealed to the magis-

trates. Seymour was allowed to open his house for four nights in the week, and Alexander for only two—Saturday and Monday, then the best nights of the six. Both being dissatisfied, appealed to the Court of Session, which only confirmed the previous decision. Now came the struggle which should outvie the other. On the opening night in the "Dominion of Fancy" everything was drowned by the clamour of a brass band which played during the whole evening by direction of Seymour, upstairs! Another appeal to the magistrates! Decision—"Neither party was to annoy the other, and on any more complaints being brought both places would be ordered to be closed." Seymour's people upstairs now lifted the planks and poured water down through them on the heads of the unoffending onlookers in the "Dominion of Fancy" below. The climax was reached by the production of "Der Freischutz" by both managers. Seymour's party from above mustered in strong force on the first night, and by means of the gaps in the planks before referred to, managed to spoil the whole effect of the incantation scene. The dragon was treated ignominiously and not permitted to emit his fiery saliva. He was also detained by his tail till all his fire was burnt out. The skeleton hunters made a like sickly and ineffectual effort to carry on their wild career. Then the drop was not allowed to fall on the picture, and Alexander had to give the word of command to "come off the stage." Everybody concerned in the magic circle had to walk off, Zamiel and his skeleton horseman included. Then suddenly down came the

curtain with such a crash that the dust which followed nearly suffocated the audience. Then the manager came forward and appealed to the public "as to how long he and his brother huntsmen were to be interrupted in the sport by the misdeeds of *foreign* intruders"—his rival was an Irishman. Neither Seymour nor Alexander, however, had much to complain of as to the receipts for the season. "Tom and Jerry" was played at both houses during the same week. It ran for a month, and so successfully was public curiosity stimulated to see both productions, that Queen Street was deserted, and Byrne, the manager of the latter, made an inglorious retreat. Seymour made a successful application for the theatre.



CHAPTER XI.

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THE entrance of Mr. Frank Seymour upon the management of the Theatre Royal, Queen Street, was not a triumphal one. The late tenant, Mr. Bryne, had decamped without paying his rent for the last six months, and with the keys of the theatre in his pocket. His successor had, therefore, to get into the theatre by climbing through a window in the green room at the back. The first engagement made by Seymour was with the famous Liston, who opened in Kenney's comedy of "Sweethearts and Wives," and also as "Neddy Bray" in the farce of "X.Y.Z." The comedian proved a tremendous success, and Seymour with the proceeds of the engagement determined to renovate the old place. Whilst the repairs were proceeding the company played at their old quarters in Dunlop Street, of which Seymour still retained possession.

When the redecoration was completed, Queen Street was reopened with "Rob Roy," supported by a strong company, and for a time matters moved smoothly. With June came the irrepressible "Battle of Waterloo," an equestrian spectacle always presented on every "18th." The equine arrangements were under the superintendence of Mr. Davis (from

Astley's), and Seymour gave an excellent impersonation of Napoleon. Perhaps the most memorable feature of Seymour's management was his production on the 10th May, 1826, of "Aladdin." Eighteen newly-painted scenes, a military band, fifty supers, magnificent properties, a flying palace built on a platform thirty feet long and eight feet broad, contributed to the success of this, one of the biggest hits Glasgow had ever known. The last notable feature, however, in connection with Seymour's brief term of management was the second engagement within a year (1828) of Andrew Ducrow, who came with a double company, including a hundred ladies and gentlemen, a stud of forty horses, a pack of hounds, and a stag, all taking part in his famous equestrian spectacle—"A Stag Hunt."

It was in the beginning of 1829 that the fatal catastrophe to Queen Street occurred. Andrew Ducrow and his troupe had scarcely departed, and Seymour had just brought up his company from Paisley to reopen for his spring campaign. "Tom and Jerry" was underlined, and on Monday evening following "Bluebeard" was to be produced. A rehearsal of the latter piece was called at eleven on Saturday, January 10th. It was a dull and wintry day. The workmen were engaged in dismantling what had been the Royal Bank, preparatory to its conversion into the front part of the present Exchange, when the attention of a few individuals was suddenly attracted to what seemed a light, misty vapour ascending from the lofty roof of the Theatre Royal. By the time the fire-engines were dragged

to the spot the whole of the interior presented one living mass of fire, and now and then when part of the galleries and boxes fell down into the pit, the flames rose from the building to a height that created anxiety not only for the safety of contiguous premises, but also for the new Exchange only a short distance off. Not a particle of the whole building was saved. Every bit of property belonging to Seymour was destroyed, including an assortment of new scenery for a little theatre in the Isle of Bute, to which Kean had subscribed £50. Music, books, papers—all fed the flames. The proprietors' losses were partially covered by insurance, but Seymour's amounted to nearly £2,000. A fancy ball was shortly afterwards announced for Seymour's benefit, and it took place on the 23rd February, in the Assembly Rooms, Ingram Street.

As for the houseless actors, some gave dramatic readings, others migrated ; but all were terrible losers by the calamity. Seymour realised from the profits of the ball a thousand pounds. "At that midnight, however, there was a whisper" that the manager was missing from the assembly ; also that he had gone away mysteriously, taking all the money with him, without having in any way attempted to settle either the rent of the hall or certain outstanding debts. He was arrested that very night on board the steamer when it was on the point of starting for Belfast. He paid the watchful creditor who had tracked him, and got clear off without having then to satisfy any others.

On Friday, October 2nd, 1829, Seymour returned,

and, backed by influential friends, opened a theatre which had been built for him in York Street, and for which he claimed the patent of the Theatre Royal. On the first night Edmund Kean played "Shylock." Braham, Rae, Macready, and a host of London stars followed. "Rob Roy," with Seymour as "Rob," was also produced ; but notwithstanding every effort for its success, the theatre closed ignominiously in about eighteen months.

Meantime Mr. J. H. Alexander had made vast alterations in Dunlop Street. On December 5, 1829, the following announcement appeared :—"Mr. Alexander hails with delight the moment which gives him an opportunity of presenting to the citizens of Glasgow a theatre which, he flatters himself, will be deemed worthy of their notice and support." He inaugurated his season with Dimond's play of "The Royal Oak, or the days of Charles the Second," in which he impersonated the "King." The manager of Dunlop Street was destined to prove a sharp thorn in the side of the York Street Theatre. Alexander had succeeded in securing the most popular stars of the day. Vandenhoff appeared on March 15th in a new play called "Shakespeare's Early Days." Miss Jarman, afterwards Mrs. Ternan, followed. Then came T. P. Cooke with his round of nautical dramas. In April, Liston came down with "Paul Pry." Wilson, the Scotch vocalist, made his first appearance in Glasgow about this time ; so also did George Horncastle, an excellent baritone (brother to the first Mrs. H. J. Lloyd). In May, Mackay played a round of his favourite characters in the



"Bride of Lammermoor," "Gilderoy," "Cramond Brig," "Guy Mannering" (the "Dominie"), and his immortal "Bailie"—Montague Stanley playing "Rashleigh." Harry Johnstone and Miss Jarman and the Siamese Twins all appeared in Dunlop Street that year, also Mr. H. F. Lloyd. Lloyd, who on 15th November, 1830, opened as the "First Gravedigger," sang a comic song, "The Humours of a Country Fair," and appeared in the farce of "Too Late for Dinner." He became at once a favourite with his audience. Kean opened a short engagement on the following Monday. "He looked," writes Mr. Lloyd, "a little, shrivelled old man, although the tragedian was then but forty years of age; so much had his excesses left their mark." Lloyd, it appears, in the character of the "Lord Mayor"—a part which is always given to the stock low comedian, and is consequently one at which an audience is usually inclined to laugh—had on the first night a mishap. In kneeling he leant too heavily on his wand of office. The wand snapped, and Lloyd fell forward "bringing his nose in contact with the stage." Naturally the audience laughed at the predicament, and even Kean himself smiled, though grimly.

"At the end of the act," Mr. Lloyd goes on to say, "I went up to him and apologised for the accident—an accident he didn't believe it to have been." "Not at all, sir," he said, deprecating my apology, "I am pleased to think that your new 'business' was so successful. It shows that a Glasgow audience can appreciate *talent* like yours. I should advise you by way of variety to introduce

next time the *original* business by shaking your head well when you say 'Ah! my lord,' by which you will bring down a shower of powder from your wig and at the same time a shower of applause from a *discriminating* public." Lloyd innocently (?) replied, "Thank you, sir, I will," and as he turned away from him he heard Kean exclaim to himself, "Idiots!"


Kean, it appears, was doomed during this engagement to meet with discomfitures. The "Iago" to his "Othello" was an old actor called Willie Johnstone. Johnstone was very rheumatic. Kean was also weak in the legs. In the business of the third act both actors knelt in front of the stage, and neither of them found it possible to get up again. On "Iago's" saying to his general "Do not rise yet," Kean was heard to mutter, "D—d if I think I shall ever rise again." Both gentlemen remained unable to move until Kean managed to raise himself by clinging to his ancient friend, in which endeavour both nearly rolled over together, the gallery boys meantime applauding vociferously, and shouting "Try it again, Willie; try the other leg. Now fau't haun's and knees." "At last," writes Lloyd, "Mr. Alexander, who was playing "Roderigo," taking pity on poor Willie, came on the stage and placed him safely on his feet amid a cry from the gods of 'Hoop La,' and a round of applause for his humanity."

The year 1832 proved a disastrous one for all connected with theatricals. It was the fatal year when Asiatic cholera first invaded our shores. Audiences were miserably thin; no one cared to stir

abroad. Kean, however, appeared again, and an engagement was effected with the incomparable Irishman, Tyrone Power—who went down a few years later with all on board the ill-fated steamer “President.” Mr. Alexander’s stock company at this time was stigmatised as *execrable*, “the very worst, perhaps, that have ever played the legitimate drama in this city, and Heaven knows we have been frequently but poorly off in this respect.” On the opening of the engagement of a star there were five people in the boxes, six in the pit, thirteen in the gallery.

The Journals of this year not only attacked from time to time the poverty of the company at the Theatre Royal, but commented in nearly every case on the indiscretion of the manager in thrusting himself before the public in everything; as chorus master, tragedian, low comedian, Yorkshireman, Scotchman, Irishman, dancer—in a word, as fancying himself the only man who could act. Lloyd, who had now joined Mr. Murray in Edinburgh, was spoken of as “our little favourite;” a Miss Richardson had won golden opinions as “leading lady,” specially in her “Meg,” to Alexander’s “Dinmont.”

With the winter season of 1834 came a fairly strong stock company, which opened in “Macbeth.” Some of the names of the company may be still remembered. First is that of John Gray, who played “Macbeth.” He was then a dashing light comedian, and won golden opinions for some time afterwards at the Adelphi on the Green, and elsewhere. The writer was brought into communication with him for



the first time about 17 years ago, when he found him in a dying state in a common lodging-house in the East-End. Poor Gray was prematurely old, all but starving, and a subscription was set agoing for him, which amounted to only a few pounds. When I brought him the first instalment of it the fading light in his eye brightened, and with something of the old professional look he spat on the sovereign, saying, "That's for luck!" He struggled into a chair, flattering himself with the hope that he should soon be himself again. On the following morning he died.

A name, then unknown to many, crops up about this time. This is no other than G. V. Brooke, who was in 1836 a member of the stock company, playing Shakespearian and other characters, including such parts as "Teddy the Tiler," &c. Of Brooke more will soon have to be told. The 24th August of the same year saw the advent of Charles Mathews (the younger) in Glasgow. The piece he chose for his *début* was "The Old and Young Stager;" that in which he had made only a short time previously his first appearance on any stage in London—*i.e.*, as a professional. As an amateur actor his success had been great enough to warrant his adopting the stage as a profession. Mathews, on this occasion, was accompanied by Mr. Meadows, long an actor at Covent Garden, subsequently a comedian at the Princess' and during the Kean's *regimé*. Mathews, on the night referred to, played also in a little comedietta called "One Hour, or the Carnival Ball," in which he danced the Tarantella with a Miss Palmer.

In 1838 the theatre was confronted by a formidable rival, no other than the great Ducrow, who after amassing a large fortune as the successor to Philip Astley in London, increased it considerably every year by his visits to the provinces. His arena was then in Hope Street. The success of this extraordinary equestrian manager may be gathered from the fact that whilst in Glasgow he purchased Castle Rosse from Horatio Ross, ex-M.P. for Aberdeen, which yielded a rental of £4000 per annum. But money brought him—one of the best natured fellows that ever breathed—neither health nor peace. On the death of his second wife, he married the famous equestrienne, Miss Woolford, of whom he had long been enamoured. The lady showed her appreciation of her lord's devotion a few years afterwards by imprisoning him illegally in a madhouse, from which he was released through the intervention of an old and grateful servant—Mackintosh, the well-known Glasgow property man—"The Old Stager" of "Stage Reminiscences," on whose breast this once Croesus of equestrian managers died.

Sheridan Knowles came down in the early part of this year, accompanied by his pupil, Miss Elphinstone, whom he shortly afterwards married. The opening of the summer season was distinguished by the first appearance in Glasgow of the brilliant and fascinating Mrs. Nesbitt, one of the most beautiful of women and most sparkling of light comediennes. She opened in "Juliana" in the "Honeymoon," playing afterwards "Mrs. Trictrac" in the "Married Rake." In the March following came Buckstone, then a very

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young actor, who was growing into as much notoriety from his pen as from his acting. His benefit was under the patronage of Sir Walter Scott, and the programme consisted of Buckstone's own little drama of "The Maid of Croissy" and the "Lottery Ticket," Buckstone playing "Wormwood."

For some months after this no star shone in the dramatic firmament; and the theatre was soon closed for enlargement and redecoration. On the 16th March, 1840, it reopened with a fairly strong company. The leading gentleman was Mr. Charles Pitt, an actor who subsequently became a very popular "star." Mrs. Charles Pitt was also in the company. Miss Fanny Pitt, so well known about fifteen years ago at the Cowcaddens Theatre Royal, was their daughter. The season closed with an engagement of Templeton, the well-known vocalist, who succeeded Wilson as a Scottish tenor, and retiring from public life many years ago, lived a very quiet life as a country gentleman, and died a few years since at his residence (next door at that time to my father's) in Twickenham. Cathcart, the father of Mr. James Cathcart—so long associated with the Keans—was the leading man at this period, and although not one who was calculated to set the Clyde on fire, he managed to get through all his business respectably. The season proved profitable though not brilliant. No stars had been allowed to swallow the profits.



## CHAPTER XII.

IN the February of the year 1842, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean—the latter who had not acted in Glasgow for seven years—played a fortnight's starring engagement. Mrs. Kean's features at this time were very classical and refined. Her nose might have been thought by some to be too prominent, but the general contour of her face was beautiful in the extreme. Kean, on the other hand, had extremely little to recommend him. He was undersized, his head was large, his nose anything but classic, his legs thin, and he always spoke as if he were suffering from a chronic cold. He could not pronounce the consonants M or N. The M he pronounced as if it were B, and the N was sounded as if it was D. As "Shylock," for instance, he would commence to retaliate on "Antonio" with "Benny (many) a tibe (time) and oft," &c. His G's and R's were always, like his father's, rendered too prominent. Thus in his speech to the Senate in "Othello" he commenced with—

Bost (most) potedt (potent) g-er-ave and  
r-r-ever-r-r-end seignors.

Notwithstanding his defects in figure, face, and speech, I have never seen in my experience any

actor who made such an impression on me as Charles Kean did in my boyish days. I can never forget the lightning of his bright, dark eye, the ease and grace of his action. Many curious stories are told of him. He was very nervous, and he naturally made others nervous. On one occasion his best point in "Richard" of "Off with his head, so much for Buckingham," in reply to the messenger's announcing—"My Lord, the Duke of Buckingham's taken," was completely nullified by the nervous messenger's announcing—"My Lord, the Duke of Buckingham's DEAD!" was for the moment, to use his favourite expression, "Flummuxed;" then he muttered audibly after a pause, "Then what the d—— are we to do with him *now*?" Kean was vain, and sought in the flattery of certain dependents a balm for the unjust scourges which the critics had inflicted on his earliest attempts at acting. "I stuck," I once heard him say, "in that last scene; didn't you notice I stuck, M——?" to one of his satellites. "I—I; no, sir," replied M——, who scarcely knew what reply would please Kean best; "I didn't notice it, sir." "Then, sir," replied Kean, with one of his father's flashes, "where could have been your eyes and ears. I should have thought your eyes would for your own advantage—*solely* for your own advantage as a young actor—have been *fixed on ME*."

On December 12th, 1842, Mr. Alexander was startled by an announcement in the journals of the day that Mr. D. P. Miller would at an early evening open the Adelphi Theatre, and that it would be his desire to retain so good an ordinary company



as to render the engagement of stars a matter of secondary importance. The *Assipoti* opened on Thursday, December 21st, 1842. The play was "Richard the Third." "Richard" by W. Johnstone, "Richmond" by John Grey. The "Swiss Cottage" followed, in which Miss Glover, sister to Edmund Glover, played "Lisette." The evening wound up with the "Lottery Ticket," with Raymond as "Wormwood."

Miller's Glasgow antecedents are now well known. In 1839 he came as a showman to Glasgow Fair, penniless. He set up a conjuring booth opposite to that of Anderson, the Wizard of the North, who was coining money through the "Great Gun Trick." Miller speedily learnt, practised, and became perfect in the trick—charged a penny where Anderson charged sixpence, cleared seventy pounds by the transaction, and determined, with his profits, to go in for theatrical management. He erected a wooden building, and issued his bills. After he had played two or three nights Alexander came down upon him for infringement of the Theatre Royal patent, and proceeded against him. Miller refused either to pay expenses or yield. On the contrary, he concocted a little pantomime, called it the "Licensed Murdered," and in it he held up all concerned in the law suit to ridicule. At the end of the legal proceedings Miller found himself lodged in jail, where he was detained by Alexander for thirteen weeks. On regaining his liberty, he continued conducting his place of amusement, but refrained from performing plays. On the passing of Sir James Graham's bill empowering local Justices to grant licenses, Miller took advantage of it at once,

applied for and obtained a license, and opened the Adelphi Theatre.

With "As You Like It," Miller made a great hit. A Miss Saker made her appearance as "Rosalind." She is described as "a young lady who frequently evinces great judgment and taste in the higher class of stage heroines; always in earnest, and perfect in the text." The lady referred to is Mrs. R. H. Wyndham, who was for so many years the much-respected manageress of the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh.

Mr. R. H. Wyndham (the criticism goes on to say) looked "Orlando" to the life, but the flagrant defect of his performance was a want of earnestness. The "Jacques" was Mr. James Johnstone, who subsequently became the stock heavy man with Shepherd and Creswick at the Surrey. Mr. Lloyd was the "Touchstone," and the "Audrey" was a Mrs. Raymond, who died about five years since. She fell in her latter years into poverty, and was dependent mainly on the kindness and benevolence of the Episcopal minister, Dr. Gordon, whose sympathy with, and generosity to, the poor player has been for many years proverbial.

On January 13th, 1843, Miss Fanny Ternan, who was announced at the Theatre Royal as the infant prodigy—eight years of age—made her *début* in Glasgow in "The Young Actress," in which she played six different characters.

The first star of any magnitude at the Adelphi was Phelps, who opened at that theatre, on February 14, as "Hamlet." Phelps was not a very frequent star

in Glasgow, but was none the less a favourite when he came. In his last engagement he played the "Bailie" and "Sir Pertinax," and in the latter (studied under Harry Johnstone) he was pronounced unrivalled. Mr. Miller now produced at the Adelphi his famous pantomime of "Baron Munchausen."

The season at the Royal closed with the engagement of Mackay, who played during it "Cromie" in "Young Lochinvar," and "Peter Peebles" in "Redgauntlet." In July, Miller produced a gorgeous spectacle of "Aladdin," Raymond acting as stage manager. Mrs. Glover, from the Haymarket, shortly afterwards followed, appearing in the prize comedy of "Quid Pro Quo."

I should ere this have referred to the fact that about the year 1835 another place of entertainment was established at the foot of the Saltmarket, one to which not a few sexagenarians still look back with many a happy memory of their childhood. This temple of the drama was "MUMFORD'S." For many years this penny show held its own, and was largely patronised.

Mumford was born in Bedfordshire, where he first learned the straw-plait trade. Far ahead in skill of the child workers by whom he was surrounded, he constructed a dress for himself, made entirely of straw. He became in consequence the lion of his vicinity. He set off for London, gave open air exhibitions, baffled the police, travelled far and wide, set up an "Italian" marionette exhibition, and with his set of puppets arranged little plays, "Babes in the Wood," "Valentine and Orson," &c. With these he

came to Glasgow, where, for many years, he enjoyed an enormous amount of patronage—chiefly from the younger portions of the community.

A thorough Bohemian, and confirmed tippler, Mumford would, for weeks at a time, absent himself; return, give an open air address on the pernicious influence of immorality, and inform the crowd outside his exhibition, how his mother exhorted him not to follow the practice most showmen did, of exhibiting all day and stealing at night. Mumford's favourite theme, when in his cups, was the teetotal question. "If you knew," he hiccuped, one day, whilst supporting himself by one of the posts supporting his exhibition, "if you knew the advantages to be derived from abstaining from intoxicating drinks you would shun whisky (*hic*) as you would the very devil." "You're drunk yourself," cried one of the crowd. "I know it," continued Mumford, "but what did I get drunk *for*? Not for my own gratification, but (*hic*) for your profit, that you might see what a beast a man is when he puts an enemy to his lips. I got drunk (*hic*) for your good."

Mumford's soon became one of the objects of the attacks of Alexander, who, by right of the Patent, prevented him from acting plays. With all Mumford's faults, his patrons knew him to be thoroughly honest, generous, and charitable, and felt when he was gone "they could better have spared a better man."

On May 31st, 1843, Lloyd brought over the whole of the Edinburgh company (seventy in all), whose engagement at Dunlop Street lasted seven nights. The programme consisted of "Single Life." Edmund

Glover made his first appearance the following night (Thursday), 1st June, as "Romeo" to the "Juliet" of Miss Montague. Glover next appeared as "Martin Heywood" in the "Rent Day," and played also "Petruchio."

On December 11th, 1843, just seven years after she had made her first appearance at Covent Garden, Miss Helen Faucit made her *début* in the Glasgow Theatre Royal, where her father had once played "Utility." The character she selected to open in was "Pauline" in the "Lady of Lyons," of which she had been the original representative. By the Glasgow press and public she was at once pronounced an artiste of supereminent talent, and during an engagement of seventeen nights, the houses were crowded. She appeared as "Pauline" four times, three times as "Juliet," "Rosalind," and "Mrs. Haller;" twice in "Patrician's Daughter," as "Mariana" ("the Wife"); and once as "Lady Macbeth." On the 9th April she returned and played twenty-three nights, adding to her list of characters "Jane Shore," "Nina Sforza," "Belvidera," and "Desdemona."

To record a list of Miss Faucit's performances from this year up to December 5, 1870, when she took her final farewell of the Glasgow stage, in the Theatre Royal, as "Beatrice" in "Much Ado About Nothing," is unnecessary. She was Glasgow's favourite actress to the last. The company at Dunlop Street, which was engaged to support Miss Faucit during her earlier visits to the city, was meagre, and as poor in number as in talent. In the May of 1845 the only actors who were worthy of mention with her were

Mr. Paumier and Mr. Alexander. The public were quite aware of Alexander's "starvation salary" policy, and on one occasion when Miss Faucit was called before the curtain to receive the congratulations of the audience, amidst showers of bouquets and thundering plaudits from boxes, pit, and gallery. Mr. Alexander, who followed to announce a new play, was pelted with vegetables. The badness of the companies she was so frequently called upon to play with, did not tend to increase any sympathy which Miss Faucit might at first have felt for provincial players, nor had a curriculum under the dictatorship of so austere a manager as Macready served to make her more tolerant of the ignorance and proverbial carelessness of the "subordinates" in Dunlop Street.

But a marked change for the better came when Edmund Glover succeeded Alexander in the management of Dunlop Street. Miss Faucit, under his reign, may be said to have reached the height of her popularity in Glasgow. She was supported in all her principal roles by perhaps the very best stock company ever gathered together in Scotland. Glover, Powrie, Paumier, Lloyd, Fitzroy, Webster—and a host of other good actors whose very names are forgotten by the present generation of playgoers—united to make almost perfect the production of such plays as "Macbeth," "As You Like It," "King John," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Lady of Lyons," "The Hunchback," and "King Rene's Daughter." Miss Faucit's "Julia," Glover's "Master Walter," and Powrie's "Clifford" never were equalled on the stage. So perfectly did these three seem fitted by nature and

intuitive genius for their parts, that Knowles' beautiful study of love and constancy, under the strain of direst trial and misfortune, never was so finely realised to that generation of playgoers.

But Miss Faucit was popular with the Glasgow actors and actresses at no period of her career. Her coldness, disdain, exacting habits, and want of consideration caused many to think and speak of her with anything but kindness. She was seldom or ever punctual at rehearsals, and the company were frequently kept waiting on the stage a couple of hours for her. Sometimes the play having been rehearsed without the star, Miss Faucit on her coming would insist in its been gone through again. The preparations made, too, for her comfort during the rehearsals and at night were looked on by the corps with a jaundiced eye as depriving them of recognised comforts and privileges. On no other star did the management lavish such attention. The preparations for her rehearsal were as minute as those for her convenience at night. A large screen was brought on the stage, and drawn behind her to shield her from any draughts which might be found lurking in the theatre. A softly-cushioned, spacious arm-chair and a footstool were conveyed out of the property room for the "star" to rest on. But most galling of all to the actors was the fact that the "Green Room," the retreat for all during "the waits," was on the occasion of her visits confiscated to the *pro tem* queen. At night the stage manager was terribly put about by the tumult in front of the house caused by the very long time the star took to rest

and change her costume. To artistes, however, on whom Miss Faucit knew she could rely, she was most delightful, affable, and forbearing.

Miss Faucit was usually on her visits to Glasgow the guest of Sir Archibald and Lady Alison, to whom the incomparable actress had been introduced in 1842.

Miss Faucit married Sir Theodore Martin in 1851, and her last public appearance in Glasgow was in St. Andrew's Hall, where she gave dramatic readings, shortly after the failure of the City Bank, in aid of a fund for the sufferers from that great commercial disaster.





CHAPTER XIII.

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1844 was Miller's second season at the Adelphi, where there was a much larger but not so good a company as at Dunlop Street. The only stars who visited the latter house were Mackay, Charles Kean, and Lloyd. Miller came in for the lion's share of public patronage, and on the stage of the wooden theatre on the Green began to shine the brightest of London stars. He soon turned his attention to the strengthening of his corps, which began steadily to improve. His leading man was the old London Adelphi favourite, Tom Lyon, and in the corps were Melbourne, low comedian; Stark, the singing Walking gentleman; M'Gregor, Scotch comedian; and Frank Raymond, stage manager. Among the stars were Graham, Lloyd, Sheridan Knowles, and Mackay—the latter, as the "Bailie," announced that he "now appeared for the first time in his ain locality, the Sautmarket." Mr. Charles Pitt also appeared, and was pronounced "a Charles Kean with a nobler presence, but a vastly inferior mind." Christmas of 1844 saw the production of the pantomime of "Cinderella," which was pronounced one of the grandest spectacles Glasgow had ever witnessed. Miller had intended to have

brought out Opera, but could not come to terms with Sims Reeves. In the pantomime were the famous Leclercq family—M. Leclercq, ballet-master; Charles Leclercq (now associated with the Daly Company); Arthur Leclercq (afterwards famous as a clown); Louise, a dancer; Carlotta, and Rose. The two latter became subsequently "household words" in the catalogue of favourite actresses in Dunlop Street. Time passes so rapidly that it will seem strange to many of their old admirers to realise the fact that these two charming girls are now recognised as "First Old Women" in London.

Alexander had meanwhile been gleaning anything but "golden opinions from either the press or the public." His company in 1844 consisted of Mr. Paumier, leading man; Mr. W. H. Eburne, eccentric comedy; Mr. Howard, juvenile light comedy; Mr. John Davis, walking gentleman; Mr. Rogerson, old man. The ladies were Miss Laura Addison, afterwards memorable as a Shakespearian actress with Phelps at the Sadlers Wells, Miss Julia Nicol, &c. The season was inaugurated by "The Honeymoon," Mr. Alexander playing the "Duke."

November 27, 1844, saw the production of "Don Cæsar de Bazan" (a drama which had just then been made popular in London through the admirable acting in it of Mr. James Wallack and Mrs. Stirling) at both theatres. Lyon was the "Don" at the Adelphi, and Paumier at the Royal.

As the strongest attraction he could think of, Alexander produced "Rob Roy," with Paumier as "Rob," May as "Galbraith," Howard as "Rash-

leigh," Eburne as "Francis," Miss Nicol as "Diana," Wilmore as "Dougal," Rogerson as "Owen," and Alexander as the "Bailie." The theatrical journals speak of the latter performance as being a vulgar imitation of Mackay's. "The whole time," writes the critic in the *Dramatic Review*, "Mr. Alexander was on the stage, he was directing everybody, players, scene shifters, and gas men; saying for instance, audibly, and heard by the whole house—'Come down here, sir;' 'Stand you there, sir;' 'M'Stuart, that's not your place, sir;' 'Beat your feet, sir;' 'Keep time with the soldiers, sir, as I do;' 'Hold up your hand, sir;' 'Speak out.' Never for a moment did he allow the audience to forget he was manager. He beat time to the orchestra, he spoke to the musicians, he sang the music for other people, and he spoke their words. In theatrical parlance, his greatest delight was to 'show the company up.'"

It was during a performance about this time of "Julius Cæsar" that one of the many memorable scenes which characterised the career of this eccentric actor-manager occurred. A gentleman in the boxes thought fit to titter aloud at Mr. Alexander's performance of the fiery Roman "Cassius." The manager paused, and fixed his eyes on the offender. The laugh was renewed. "Cassius" then stepped forward and said—"I must request the gentleman to pay more attention to good manners and to the feelings of the audience. I can't have the entertainment spoilt by the disgraceful conduct of a Puppy. For myself," continued the irate manager, "I consider myself quite competent to play the part I am engaged in, and if

that fellow in the boxes"—here "Cassius" pointed to the disturber—"continues his annoyance, I shall feel myself compelled to personally turn him out." Mr. Alexander was here greeted with ironical cheers and shouts of "Never mind him!" "He's not laughing at you!" "Go on!" Mr. Alexander had not proceeded to comply with the latter request long, when the ribald sound again fell on his ears. Mr. Paumier as "Brutus" now took up the cudgels. "I," cried "Brutus," "can't stand this sort of thing any longer." The majestic "Brutus" then for the nonce cast aside his toga and his dignity, got over the footlights, climbed the railing of the box, engaged in a wonderfully anti-classical fisticuff encounter with the object of his scorn, and forcibly put the offender out of the theatre. The play was then allowed to proceed.

Another memorable scene shortly afterwards occurred. The *Dramatic Review* of February 26, 1845, records—"On Saturday evening, the amusements commenced with the worn-out tragedy of 'Jane Shore,' which was followed by 'Short Cut and Returns.' In the character of 'Scamp,' Mr. Alexander interlarded the author with a superabundance of his own good things; and the laughter which his grotesque and absurd personation drew from the galleries encouraged him to introduce an extra quantum of his own peculiar dancing. He also busied himself in giving in a loud voice directions in stage minutæ, ordering Mr. Davis to 'hold up his hand,' Mrs. Davis to 'Speak out,' &c. The entire proceedings being viewed by the audience with much dissatisfac-

tion, an universal hiss greeted him, and he stepped forward as 'Scamp,' and made a speech to the following effect :—

“‘I own I appear before you under somewhat unfavourable circumstances ; but the reason is, some of my people have come to the theatre in such a state of drunkenness, that in the discharge of my duty to you, that no one should appear in your theatre who is not in a fit state to do so, I have been so harassed that my part has been completely driven out of my head.’

“The curtain dropped: a minute elapsed: then the stage door was thrown open, and 'Scamp,' still in his Highland costume, walked on to the stage, looked down into the orchestra, and muttering 'It is all *your* fault,' commenced another address. 'Ladies and Gentlemen,—I have been told by Mr. Paumier, a gentleman whom you all know well, that I am an ill-used man. (Loud shouts of laughter.) I am a sober, well-doing man myself. I always do my duty, and try to make others do theirs. It would be robbing you were I not to see that those who come here are able to do their duty, and should such a circumstance as this again happen I will shut the doors of the theatre and request the indulgence of those who come to visit it.'

“Then he again retired. The audience thought they had got rid of him, but no. Immediately afterwards the orchestra door opened and the head of Mr. Alexander (still dressed as 'Scamp') again appeared, with rage stamped on his face, and called Mr. Allwood (the leader of the orchestra) to 'Come out.' Mr.

Allwood disregarded the mandate ; looked quietly about while it was repeated in a still louder key. The manager then advanced to the middle of the orchestra and ordered him to quit it. A scene of indescribable confusion ensued. The audience rose *en masse*. Mr. Allwood would not leave the orchestra, but offered to proceed with the business. Mr. Alexander said he would not allow a drunkard to be in the house. Mr. Allwood replied he was perfectly sober. He ordered the band to strike up, and commenced leading in excellent style. Mr. Alexander wrested the music from him and ordered the musicians to stop. The audience by turns laughed, chuckled, cried 'Shame;' shouted for Mr. Alexander to retire and to allow the pantomime ('The Old Woman who Lived in a Shoe') to go on.

"Mr. Alexander, turning his face towards the house, again addressed the audience.

"'Mr. Allwood came here to-night after four musics of the tragedy were over.'

"Mr. Allwood, interrupting, 'I am willing to pay the fine, and am quite sober.'

"Mr. Alexander—'You refused to pay it at the time. I won't take it now.'

"Mr. Allwood now appealed to the audience, 'Ladies and gentlemen, I appeal to you if I am drunk! I have composed the music of this pantomime. The music is mine.'

"Mr. Alexander, interrupting, 'The music is mine ; all the music in the house is mine.'

"The confusion increased. The audience, dividing into factions, rendered the theatre a perfect Babel.

Cries were bellowed out of 'Go on, or it will be Sabbath before you begin.' Mr. Alexander ordered the police to be brought. There is no saying how long the uproar might have continued, had not some gentlemen from the boxes stepped forward and persuaded Mr. Allwood to retire. He bowed to the audience, and with Mr. Alexander left the orchestra."

The year 1845, in which Miss Aitken made (as "Clari") her first appearance on the stage, was destined to see another "Richmond" in the dramatic field. This was no other than Mr. J. H. Anderson, the great "Wizard of the North." Rumours of the intention of this far-famed conjuror to erect a theatre in the immediate vicinity of Miller's Adelphi reaching the ears of Miller, the latter was induced to seek out the Wizard, to endeavour if possible to come to terms. Anderson agreed to give Miller £1,000, and the latter consented to take Anderson as a partner. This arrangement, however, fell through, and Anderson built a splendid theatre on the Green for himself, which he called the City Theatre. It was opened for the display of magic, dancing, &c., during the Fair, after which season he applied for a dramatic license, which was at first refused, but subsequently granted. Anderson's season commenced with great spirit. It opened on May 7th, 1845, with an operatic company, consisting of Sims Reeves, announced as Mr. J. S. Reeves, Mrs. Alban Croft, Mr. Morley, and Mr. Brown. The magnificence of the City Theatre induced Miller to reconstruct the Adelphi at a cost of nearly two thousand pounds. He meanwhile took his company over to Edinburgh to produce "Cherry and Fair

Star," and the engagement proved a success; but Alexander arrested the whole of Miller's property, including the cash taken at the doors, upon the claim of unsettled law expenses incurred in the prosecution of two years before.

Anderson proved a thorn in the side of both his rivals. Although he had started eighteen months after Miller the magnificence of his spacious theatre became a very powerful loadstone to some of the best stars. Sims Reeves and Morley both appeared in the "Bohemian Girl," and the tenor created a perfect *furor*. Mrs. Fitzwilliam, the star of the London Adelphi, charmed all beholders by her matchless performance in the "Belle of the Hotel" and her "Starlight Bess" in the "Flowers of the Forest." A Mr. Couldoch, an American actor, came down and played a round of parts with the greatest acceptance. Amongst the members of the stock company was a Mr. Barry Sullivan, then a very tall, slim young man, whose "articulation," it was said, "was very distinct, but who did not appear to understand any character he attempted." Sullivan shortly after this retired from public life for a short time, in order to perfect himself in the study specially of Shakspearian parts. He opened in 1852 as a "star" at the Haymarket, was eulogised by the press for certain new readings which he gave in his "Hamlet;" amassed a large fortune by acting in the provinces and Australia, and retained his popularity until his last sad illness, which commenced three years ago, compelled him to leave the stage, which terminated fatally six months since.

Anxious to vary his entertainments, Anderson



turned his attention to spectacle, but with a disastrous result. He produced the old melodrama of "One o'clock ; or, the Knight of Wood Demon ;" Mr. Anderson starring himself in large letters as "Hardycanute." The piece was a monstrous absurdity from the pen of the well-known "Monk Lewis." It was, however, well mounted, and the only failure connected with it was the acting of the manager himself, whose performance, it was said, was beneath criticism.

The performances of the evening of November 18, 1845, were destined never to be forgotten by any one who was connected with them. They consisted of "Der Freischutz" and "The Jewess," and terminated about half-past eleven. About a quarter-past twelve o'clock the watchman employed by the proprietor discovered that the theatre was on fire at the rear in the vicinity of the stage. The alarm was immediately given. The engines were soon on the spot, but too late to save any portion of the ill-fated fabric. The wind, blowing northward, carried the flames towards the Adelphi, on the roof of which were placed a number of firemen ; their faces lit up by the lurid glare. By their strenuous efforts they deluged the theatre, and so saved it from sharing the fate of the ill-starred "City." The night was dark, and the gloom lent an additional effect to the weirdness of the scene, casting a ghastly light on the dense crowd which, despite the drenching rain, thronged the street in front, and the Green in rear of the burning pile.

Rumour sent numerous fictions afloat as to the cause of the fire, but the most probable explanation

is that some of the sparks from the fireworks used in "Der Freischutz" alighting on material of inflammable nature had caused the disaster. The walls were left nearly entire. A few minutes after the flames had burst out Mr. Anderson was seen struggling through the crowd, and was with difficulty withheld by the bystanders from rushing into the building. All the scenery and dresses were burnt—even the night's receipts were lost. The building, however, was insured in the Sun, West of England, and York Fire Offices, and a substantial mark of sympathy was soon offered the unfortunate manager in the various benefits and subscriptions which were at once put on foot in his behalf.

During the brief career of this ill-fated theatre (from August 25 to November 18) many a memorable star appeared. Tragedy and spectacle, too, were produced, and everything was done well. But for the fire Anderson would probably have reaped a golden harvest from his management; as it was, if his statement is to be believed, he lost his all—as he also did (so he said) ten years afterwards by the burning of Covent Garden Theatre, of which he was at the time manager.




CHAPTER XIV.

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THIS year, 1845, witnessed the appearance of the first travelling company which ever appeared in Glasgow. It was that of the Theatre Royal, Haymarket, which, during a summer vacation in London, came on tour in the provinces—Mr. Webster, with his characteristic generosity, lending the *corps*, the costumes, properties, and everything needed for the representation in the London style of the old comedies, for which the Haymarket Theatre for more than a century had been famous. The members consisted of Messrs. Howe, Holl, Brindal, Braid, Tilbury, Strickland, Coe, and little Clark, and Miss Julia Bennett, Mrs. Humby, &c. Webster himself came for a week and played gratis, refusing even to accept of travelling expenses. The performances were an enormous success, and the members of the company were on many occasions fêted by their numerous friends and patrons.

The close of the year 1845 saw the advent in Glasgow of that remarkable actress, Miss Cushman, who was then on tour. She appeared first at Dunlop Street as "Bianca" in "Fazio," and was at once pronounced by the press and public as one of the most original actresses ever seen. Her "Rosalind"



met with similar approbation. As to her "Meg Merrilees" "nothing had been seen to equal it since the days of the elder Kean." It was not, strictly speaking, Scott's "Meg," but it was, notwithstanding, a wonderful performance, indescribably thrilling in its weird originality. Her entrance struck the keynote to her conception of the character. She glided noiselessly on to the stage—stood motionless, with her large, lustrous eyes, o'ershadowed by her white eyebrows, gazing on Henry Bertram. One bare, gaunt, wrinkled arm was outstretched, and a skinny finger pointed at him—she supporting herself on a bough torn from a tree. No one could recognise a feature of the actress they had seen only the night before as "Romeo," still less could they recognise her as "Meg" when on being recalled she appeared in all the charm of the neatness of her ordinary attire. The performance of the play at Dunlop Street was not memorable but for the fact that Mr. Alexander, who played the "Dandie," appeared in the first scene leading a chorus consisting of only three, and that Mr. F. Belton (afterwards lessee of the Prince of Wales) that night was "Henry Bertram." During one evening of this engagement Sheridan Knowles, who was then on a visit to Glasgow, entered the boxes, and being recognised as the author of the play of the "Wife," in which Miss Cushman was then acting "Mariana," was loudly cheered.

The Adelphi opened its season of 1846 with the "Cricket on the Hearth," Mrs. R. H. Wyndham playing "Bertha," and Mrs. Dyas (our first "Marquise" in "Caste"), "Dot." The principal "stars" who

followed, were Webster and Celeste, and Ira Aldridge. Macready, who had not acted for fourteen years, played for a few nights, but was not received with any special marks of enthusiasm, the press merely remarking "That to see Macready once was to see him always." The prices were raised and the business fell. In this season the famed Taglioni danced for the first time before a Glasgow audience. J. W. Ray (our first "Eccles") played then "old men," and so well that he was said to be an improvement on Mackay; except in Scotch characters. The company was spoken of most favourably.

From 1846 to 1849 theatricals were at a discount. Alexander, as an attraction, reduced his prices to "second price from the commencement," but without effect. Reduction of prices, it was said, was not what was wanted. It was not the high prices which prevented the house being crowded, but the low standard of talent engaged. This latter fact was amply proved by the crowds which patronised Miller's Adelphi. From 1846 to 1849 matters at Dunlop Street were gloomy enough—no stars and a poor company. Alexander produced the Strand version of "Martin Chuzzlewit," and brought down a clever comedian, Mr. Henry Hall, the original "Pecksniff," who doubled the part with "Sairéy Gamp," Alexander playing "Montague Tigg;" also "Othello" (Travestie) to Hall's deservedly famous "Iago." Down, too, came Davenport (whom Dickens immortalised in "Nicholas Nickleby" as "Bricks and Mortar" Crummles) and his daughter, the "Phenomenon." As Davenport was found too cumbrous, not to say

aged, for "Romeo," Alexander determined to play the youthful lover himself. On this occasion occurred another of those scenes which made Dunlop Street and its twenty years' manager notable, not only to Glasgow but to all the play-going world. Alexander's appearance as the love-sick swain was the signal for a storm of ironical cheers. Shout upon shout of derisive laughter greeted him throughout the earlier scenes, and the climax was reached when in the third act the "Friar" summoned him to appear, crying "Come forth, thou *fearful* man." When Mr. Alexander had fallen on the ground, "taking the measure of an unmade grave," the uproar became so great that quite unmindful of his being supposed to be lying unconscious, Mr. Alexander suddenly raised his head from the stage, and thus addressed his adversaries:—"I know," said he, "you think I can't play 'Romeo'—('Oh, oh!')—I know I'm not so young as I was—(ironical shouts of 'Hear, hear')—but I have played it all over the world—(a cry of 'Anywhere else, Aleck!')—and with the best actresses, and, thank God, I can play it *still* when there is a necessity. I have been called an egotist. I *am* an egotist, but I know my profession and can play on it, like Paganini on the one string of his violin, and to that you are indebted for the proper management of the theatre. Now!" Then throwing himself once more on the ground he resumed his dialogue with the nurse—"Speakest thou of 'Juliet?' how is't with her?" Here the shouts in the gallery were resumed. Then Alexander got up once more and turned on his foes—"If you treat me civilly I shall

do the same to you in return, but when roused you will find I am a lion." He paused, and glared defiance. Then he lay down again on the stage, and as "Romeo," inquired of the "Nurse," "Where is she?" During the entire evening the fight was constantly being renewed.

In the course of the evening Miss Davenport came forward and sang. Mr. Davenport, who was on the stage, applauded his daughter very warmly, and cried out "Beautiful! beautiful!" The plaudits bestowed by the public on the "Phenomenon" not being by her father considered worthy of his child's efforts; inspired by the example of the manager, Mr. Davenport now thought he would have *his* words with the audience. "I wonder," he murmured audibly to the audience, "she could sing at all after playing tragedy in the way she has done, and 'Juliet' too!" The opportunity for his addressing the Public was not long in coming. Miss Davenport sang a ballad, and then danced with somebody the polka. "Encore," shouted the delighted gods. Now was the time for Mr. Davenport's oratorical powers to assert themselves. "Encore!" he exclaimed, stepping forward. "I am astonished! I am shocked! You call for a repetition of the polka! Are you aware from whom you demand that dance? Do you not recognise the fact that Miss Davenport is a tragedy actress! That she has to-night sustained one of the heaviest tragedy parts——" ("Order," cried the gods, "Go on.") "Sir," exclaimed the outraged parent, pointing at one unfortunate boy in the gallery, "if *you* had done as much as she has done—yes, *YOU*,

sir—permit me to remark, *you* would not have been able to move.” (Hisses.) Mr. Davenport looked round with indignant astonishment. “These are sounds,” continued the irate parent, “which I am not accustomed to! I have travelled, allow me to inform you, and, as your journals of the universe have testified, all over Europe and America, with Miss Davenport, but have never before been treated in this way.” Mr. Davenport then made an appeal to that justice which had ever, did ever, and would, he ventured to hope, continue to characterise the British public. He then bowed mechanically and retired, amid the jeering and the uproar made by the scanty auditory of that eventful night.

Miller's engagements were now becoming anything but remunerative. In connection with the farewell one of Charles Mathews and Madame Vestris, he bitterly complained as to their insisting on having their full demands satisfied, in spite of their being aware that this so doing would necessitate all but starvation on the part of the *corps*. Unfortunately Mathews had as little pathos in his disposition as he had in his acting. Externally and internally he was always easy and finished, and “cool as a cucumber,” as polished as a sword, and sometimes as heartless. Mrs. Fanny Kemble was the last star of any importance who played at the Adelphi, and she brought more grist to the mill than any of her predecessors. The audience, when the curtain fell on her “Juliet,” rose *en masse*, and amid waving of hats and handkerchiefs testified their enthusiastic approbation of the gifted actress. Mr. Elphinstone



was the "Romeo" on the occasion. Great as the praise was which the press bestowed on her "Juliet," it was yet more lavish on her acting as "Julia" in "The Hunchback;" to this Miss Aitken played "Helen," and was said at that time to be the best representative of the character Glasgow had ever seen.

Miller's lease expired soon after this. The theatre passed into the hands of Messrs. Reynolds & Munro, and Miller was cast once more adrift. With borrowed cash the ex-manager took a public-house. Then he became again a prisoner for debt. When he was released, the theatre was again offered to him in conjunction with Mr. Calvert. Miller accepted the offer, but after three months Calvert bought Miller out, and remained sole lessee until the theatre was destroyed by fire. The fire broke out about one o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, November 22, 1848, whilst the actors were rehearsing a drama called "The Ocean Monarch, or Ship on Fire." By a singular coincidence one of the actors, who represented Captain Murdoch, was addressing a speech to the passengers on the impropriety and danger of smoking in relation to setting a vessel on fire, when he observed a sudden glare of light in the north-west corner of the upper gallery. He had scarcely time to utter an exclamation of alarm, when the flames shot along the whole range of the gallery seats. The stage was in an instant deserted. The actors, carpenters, and musicians all fled in every direction. Information was at once given to the Fire Brigade, but it was too late to save the building, and

efforts had at once to be made to preserve some adjacent booths, and also St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, the roof of which the flames had caught. The heat was so intense as to literally burn the hair off the back of an unfortunate horse which was passing within a few yards of the flames. Within an hour and a half after the fire was first discovered, every vestige of the theatre had been reduced to a mere mass of blackened stumps. Calvert, who was the lessee, had not insured the building, and, with the exception of a few stage costumes, lost everything. A brick building was afterwards erected by Calvert, and was called the Queen's Theatre, in commemoration of her Majesty's recent visit to St. Mungo. Calvert applied for a dramatic license, but was refused. In defiance, however, of the refusal, he opened the following October.

The summer of 1848 was notable chiefly for the appearance of Charles Dickens, who, surrounded by his group of literary *confrères*, gave two performances. The first of these was in aid of the funds for the establishment of a permanent curator to Shakespeare's House, for which Knowles had been nominated by Dickens. The first night's performance was that of the "Merry Wives of Windsor" and "Animal Magnetism." Of the second performance, Dickens, in writing to a friend, says:—"July 27, 1848.—I shall never be quite happy in a theatrical point of view, until you have seen me play an English version of the French piece 'L'Homme Blase,' which fairly turned the head of Glasgow." Last Thursday night the cast for "Used Up" was as follows:—

Sir Charles Coldstream,	. . .	Dickens
Sir Adonis Leach,	. . .	Mark Lemon.
Ironbrace,	. . . . .	Geo. Cruickshank.
Fennell,	. . . . .	Augustus Egg.
James,	. . . . .	Frederick Dickens.
Mary,	. . . . .	Miss Annie Romer.
Lady Clutterbuck,	. . . . .	Mrs. C. Clarke.

This was followed by the farce "Love, Law, and Physic," and the evening concluded with "Two in the Morning" by Dickens and Mark Lemon. In the "Merry Wives" Dickens played "Slender," Mark Lemon "Sir John Falstaff," and John Forster—who took the lion's share of the applause—"Mr. Ford." The second evening the proceeds were given to the fund in aid of the Glasgow unemployed operatives. The dress boxes were on the occasion raised to 10s., pit stalls (introduced) 10s., upper boxes 5s., and gallery 2s.

Mr. Edmund Glover brought to Glasgow on October 2nd and October 4th, Jenny Lind, who, supported by Signor F. Lablache and M. Roger, appeared in "La Figlia de Regimento" and "Sonnambula." The speculation proved profitable to Glasgow in many ways—in one more especially, that it brought to the City the ablest of managers—Mr. Glover himself. By the Jenny Lind engagement, he netted £3,000, and he then determined to conduct a theatrical campaign. A large hall in West Nile Street, which was occupied from time to time with panoramas and other like exhibitions, caught his eye. He came at once to terms with the proprietor, converted it into a play-

house, and called it the Prince's Theatre. It was rather larger than the old Adelphi, London. On January 15th, 1849, he opened it with an operatic, "Vaudeville," and ballet company. The opera was one which has since, for some unexplained cause, died out. It was Loder's "Giselle." The artistes were Payne, Delavante, Miss Rowland, Miss Bleadon, Miss Lonsdale, R. Isaacs. "Giselle" was followed by "The Imperial Guard," which was supported by Edmund Glover, Lloyd (who was acting manager), and Miss Fielding; and the "Swiss Cottage," in which both Lloyd and Sam Cowell appeared. After producing a series of operas, and appearing himself in a round of his favourite characters, such as "Megrin" (Blue Devil), "Robert Macaire," "Claude Melnotte," "Horatio Craven," "Phillippe," &c., he produced a magnificent spectacle called the "Court Ball in 1740." The first gentleman Mr. Glover introduced was destined afterwards to become a celebrity. This was Tom Powrie. He had risen from the amateur ranks at Dundee, and made his first appearance in Glasgow on April 10th as "Iago" to the "Othello" of Edmund Glover, the "Desdemona" of Miss Fielding, and the "Emilia" of Mrs. Ternan. The reception accorded to Powrie, and the notices he obtained the following day, warranted Mr. Glover in announcing him the next week for "Sir Edward Mortimer" in "The Iron Chest," the cast on the occasion being—

Fitzharding, . . . .	Mr. Silver.
Winterton Marshall, . .	Sampson Lloyd.
Wilford . . . .	Mr. George Everett.
Lady Helen, . . . .	Mrs. Ternan.

A few nights afterwards, Powrie played "Antonio" in the "Merchant of Venice."

Powrie's subsequent career as an actor in Glasgow, where he resided after his marriage with Miss Julia Glover, is too well known to need comment. In every character he played, there was evidence of care, energy, and forethought. Strangely enough he was one of the most nervous of men, and in his later years could never be induced to trust himself in a new part. On one occasion, in view of Miss Aitken's appearing in "Julia," he attempted—after a six weeks' notice—to appear as "Master Walter," but at the last rehearsal his nerves failed him; he put in no appearance that morning, sent down to the theatre to say he was unable to act, and at the last moment, to the great discomfiture of Miss Aitken, a substitute had to be procured, and the character was played by Mr. Mortimer Murdoch.

During this brief season Mr. Glover's corps consisted of Miss O'Brien, a pupil of the great Mrs. Glover, Miss Fielding, Miss Ada Harcourt, Mrs. Bland, Miss Massal, Messrs. George Everett, Montague, Smythson, John Silver, Lloyd, S. Cowell, Beckett, Melville, Marshall, and C. Bland. The conductor of the orchestra was Mr. Allwood, Alexander's old foe. As "Rob Roy" Powrie (who was an enthusiastic student of Scott) was pronounced unrivalled, and in London probably he would in the character have created a *furor*. He appeared as the "Chieftain" in Drury Lane, but for one night only, met unfortunately with a slight accident, was unable

to act there again, returned to Scotland, where he played occasionally, and retired to Edinburgh, where he died. In his last moments two friends only were present. Both were actors. One was Mr. Willie Campbell, to whom allusion has been made as having been, with the exception of Mackay, the best of Glasgow "Bailies." Engagements followed with the Covent Garden Opera Company — Harrison, Miss Rainforth, H. Corri, Borroni, W. H. Murray, Rosa Bennett. Then came a famous burlesque of "Romeo and Juliet," with Sam Cowell and Lloyd; and "Bombastes Furioso," with Lloyd, Cowell, and Honey; then the great Mrs. Glover. The light comedian at this time was Mr. Belton, one of the many "who strut and fret their hour on the stage and then are seen no more." Shortly after quitting Glasgow he joined Kean's Company at the Princess, played seconds to Kean, starred in the provinces, became in 1864 leading man in Dunlop Street, and afterwards took the Prince of Wales, West Nile Street, which ruined him. When last seen, he was standing, as a supernumerary, on the stage of the Princess', London, the scene of his former triumphs. "Fortune's wings are made of Time's feathers, which stay not whilst one may measure them."

How far Mr. Glover had by this time succeeded may be judged by the following paragraph from the *Mail*:—"After a tolerably extensive experience of the theatres in England and Scotland, we can conscientiously say we know of no theatre which ladies can visit with such comfort, propriety, and freedom

from annoyances as the Prince's, Glasgow. The house is comfortably and prettily fitted up, the performances are conducted with the utmost propriety, the audience is highly respectable, and nothing calculated to offend the eye or the ear is permitted on the stage or amongst the audience."



CHAPTER XV.

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SATURDAY, the 17th of February, 1849, was destined to witness one of the most awful scenes which has ever occurred in the annals of the theatre—the never-to-be-forgotten loss of human life, consequent on a false alarm of fire. The theatre in Dunlop Street that night, was filled to overflowing. The upper gallery—admission to which had, during the run of the pantomime, been reduced to threepence—was crowded with lads, who had saved their pennies out of their weekly wage to go and see “The Surrender of Calais,” supported by the whole strength of the Company, and the Pantomime. In the first piece, Mr. Alexander took the leading part, and among his supporters were Mr. Langley and Mr. Fred. Younge. The latter was our first “George d’Alroy” (“Caste”). The performance commenced. “The Siege of Calais” was an old-fashioned melodrama of the “mail clad” order, and the first act fell amid acclamations of vociferous delight, from the crowded audience. This must have been somewhere between seven and eight o’clock.

A star had been announced for the following Monday—Hudson, the Irish comedian, from Covent Garden. He had just arrived, and was standing



at the side-wings conversing with the manager on the subject of the late burning of Anderson's Theatre on the Green. "They all, sir," said the manager, with his customary drawing of his fingers across his chin, "they all, sir, come to the ground. No theatre seems exempt from fire but MINE. I've been manager now for twenty years——" Before Mr. Alexander could finish the sentence, they heard a murmur coming from the front of the house. It grew louder, and finally merged into an uproar; but one cry was heard above all—"FIRE!!!" It came from the closely-packed upper gallery. The people in the immediate vicinity felt at first no alarm. There was a slight commotion—a perceptible movement—in the gallery; but those who were in the lower gallery, pit, and boxes, kept their seats. In the upper gallery many were in doubt as to whether the alarm was real. The confusion increased. Several gentlemen who were in the boxes rose and cried to those in the gallery, "Keep your seats; there's no danger." The band continued playing all the time. The cry of "Fire" now swelled into a roar. Some were crying out "Order," others shouted for "Water" to quench the flames. The uproar brought the manager at once on the stage to discover the meaning of the hubbub. What he said was entirely lost in the din and clamour all around, but it seems to have been to the effect that he had sent men up to the gallery to extinguish the flame. Whilst he was speaking, a young man in the gallery, dressed in a blue jacket and fustian trousers, put one of his feet over the front of the gallery, and

used his heel as a hammer to force out the panel. Then came a shout of "It's the gas, it's the gas!"

A little smoke now was seen issuing out of the front of the gallery—not more (as described by an eye-witness) than that which might have exhaled from a person smoking a pipe; but a bright light soon afterwards shot out, followed by sparks. One or two men in their shirt sleeves now were seen amongst the crowd. They wrenched the boarding up from the inside of the breastwork. A man named James Finlay, quietly took off his cap, and stuffing it into the outlet made by the fire, at once extinguished the flame. Everything seemed now righted. The band struck up again. There was a general shout of "All's right." The young man in the blue jacket stood up, lifted a piece of wood, and, flourishing it over his head, proposed "Three cheers," to which general acclamation he marked the time. All settled down with renewed zest to see the play out. All would have gone off happily enough, but unfortunately, about this time a fireman appeared, dressed in his uniform, his helmet standing out in bold relief. It was taken as an evidence that the fire had not been extinguished. The sight of such an official was enough. Shouts of "Fire!" and cries and screams from the affrighted crowd at once followed. The general panic was renewed. A frantic rush was made to the main stair, which led to the street.

Down the steps pell mell, they rushed in one tumultuous mass, one confused tangled human heap struggling, fighting, writhing for life. The

swarm of human beings would soon have exhausted itself, but in the general derangement, some of the foremost, on reaching the landing place above the short flight of steps which led into the street, stumbled and fell. Whilst the majority of those in the pit and boxes were watching the stage with renewed satisfaction, a murmur was heard in the boxes. One gentleman was telling others near him that "There were people being killed on the stairs." The rumour reached the anxious ears of the manager. He at once made his way from the stage to the front; thence to the gallery door through the lane. What pen can paint the horrors of the scene which met his gaze? A mangled death-pack—young and old, men and women, boys and girls, and even infants lying crushed in a hideous pile; above it an upheaving sea of human faces. The air was filled with groans and cries and shrieks for aid. Alexander roared himself hoarse in his efforts to subdue the panic. He rushed to the private door, and was followed speedily by two of the dramatic company, Mr. Langley and Mr. Fred. Younge. Some stage carpenters joined them.

The Fire Brigade, which had been summoned on the first alarm, but which had gone back thinking it was a false one, had by this time returned. Hatchets in hand they broke in the windows of the lane which looked on the staircase and entered, literally walking over the heads of the sufferers. The crowd now made another dash forward towards the door, trampling on one another. Eight hundred




people were on this fatal staircase at one time. When the firemen appeared at the foot of the staircase, they seemed for a moment to share the general frenzy, and scarcely seemed to realise the nature of their duty. To remove the sufferers was now found to be worse than useless. When one was taken away the others above, only fell with increased weight on those beneath them. All chance of escape had been cut away. Those on the stairs behind, hearing shrieks in the gallery—for even those in safety took up the general cry—pressed forward the more strongly, and so the more furiously increased the barrier of the dense block of living and dead.

Meanwhile, Mr. Alexander, Mr. Langley, and Mr. Younge, clad in all the ghastly mockery of steel-clad warriors of the drama in which they had so lately been engaged, assisted by the carpenters, worked unceasingly to rescue the wretched sufferers. They never flagged in their energies for an instant. They firmly, forcibly, but quietly, dragged men and women out of the crowd and passed them out by other means of egress. Had those in the gallery only taken advantage of the many means of exit which were at once thrown open, that channel might have been emptied in three minutes. Fifty people who must otherwise inevitably have perished, owed their lives solely to the undaunted energy displayed by the manager and these two actors, whose own lives were more than once endangered in their laudable attempts. The wounded and dying were dragged out by scores and carried to rooms in the

neighbourhood; the dressing-rooms connected with the theatre being far too few and small to hold the sufferers. The Garrick Hotel opposite—the rendezvous of actors, where some of their sunniest hours had been passed, whose walls were wont to resound with the best of jokes and raciest of stories—was transformed into a temporary hospital. Every house in the vicinity which could afford aid opened its doors.

The awful night at length came to an end, but only to usher in a still more ghastly morning. The bodies had been conveyed to Clyde Street Hospital. Round about the building hundreds waited through the hours of darkness, frantic with anxiety to know whether their missing ones were amongst the victims. One poor lad, a picture of woe, walked helplessly up and down looking vacantly on a bonnet and the remnants of a shawl which he carried in his hands. They had been taken from his sweetheart, who was with him in that fatal crush. He cried out piteously “How can I go home to her parents without her and tell them of this.” At eleven o’clock that Sabbath morning, as the church bells ceased tolling for worship, thousands who met to thank God for His mercies of the week, must have bowed their sad heads in speechless awe before the inscrutable Dispenser of sickness and health, of life and sudden death. The doors of the hospital were opened for inspection. The number of persons trampled to death or suffocated was seventy. The faces of the hapless victims, for the most part, bore no



trace of pain—no shadow of the last agony—all seemed in peaceful sleep. Their lips were clenched, but the features were not distorted. Nearly all were lads. Only six females were amongst them, and one of these was a little child of three years old. The money found on the bodies amounted in all to only 17s. 1d.

From the shock occasioned by the awful catastrophe of 1849, Mr. Alexander never recovered. The edge of his humour was from this time blunted, and the ghastly scene haunted him with a superstitious dread. His old spirits had fled; he retired more and more into himself. His untiring exertions, which for so many years had been devoted to the theatre, began to flicker. Those who knew him best now shook their heads and said "Old Alec" was failing. Still he struggled on, until in 1851 he felt he could no longer battle with the attacks from press and public, and in the summer of that year he transferred the management of the theatre to Mr. Simpson of Birmingham. Alexander's life from this time became aimless. By slow and easy degrees his health began to wane, and on the 15th of December, 1851, he quietly slipped away.

"He was a man," says his biographer, and all who knew him will endorse the statement, "who was rigidly honest in his dealings, and if he was sometimes blamed for his frugality, those who were the readiest to censure him on that account, would have been the first to despise him if, by neglecting his own interests, he had not succeeded in the world. The

great secret of his success was his energy. He went through the work of six men daily. He employed no stage manager—no amanuensis. He constructed and laid out his own scenery—put into the hands of his painter the whole of the work which appeared in the theatre for years—selected a great portion of his own melodramatic music—superintended and directed the business from the commencement of the rehearsals each day.”

On April 19, 1849, Mr. J. F. Cathcart took a benefit at Dunlop Street. The tragedy on this occasion of “Romeo and Juliet” brought Mr. Cathcart for the first time before a Glasgow audience as “Romeo,” and Miss Fanny Cathcart as “Juliet.” “Jemmy Cathcart,” as he was familiarly called, was an exceptionally painstaking young actor. He rose from the rank of call-boy to that of prompter in Alexander’s company. As the son of an old comrade of the elder Kean, young Cathcart was offered by Charles Kean an engagement at the Princess’, where the lad gradually rose from playing Kean’s “double” in the “Corsican Brothers” to the part of “Juvenile Man,” and he eventually became Kean’s “right hand” in their professional tours. A misunderstanding, unfortunately, led to an estrangement between Cathcart and his patron, whom the former held in almost slavish admiration. At Kean’s death, Cathcart joined Mr. Barry Sullivan, and is now playing “Old men” in touring companies in Australia.

February 17, 1850, saw the re-appearance at Dunlop Street of G. V. Brooke. The tragedian was now in

the zenith of his fame. He had taken London by storm, and in the provinces was in the habit of driving to the theatre in a carriage and four, with postillions. A few years before this, Brooke was only the obscure manager of the theatre at Kilmarnock, at which town, being unable to pay his lodgings, he had been compelled to take up his quarters in the dressing-room at that miserable "Temple of Arts," which was situated over a stable. A happy accident brought him to the Olympic in London, and a still happier one made him world-famous as "Othello," in which he made his *début*. The next morning Brooke found himself "The lion of the day." His salary of £10 per week was at once raised to £60. The managers of Drury Lane and Haymarket immediately offered him fabulous sums for an engagement; but Brooke remained at the Olympic, and played there for the season. Had he been but as wise a man as he was talented, he might have realised an enormous fortune; but, alas! generous, courteous, charitable, and kind, poor Brooke was careless alike of constitution as of character, and ruined both with drink. He played many engagements in Dunlop Street, the last one shortly before he took his fatal voyage on board the s.s. "London" for Australia. Here on the sinking vessel, as she was going down in the Bay of Biscay, the last that was seen of Brooke—who had worked for hours at the pumps—was leaning over a rail, "his bare feet paddling with the rising waters," his brilliant eyes gazing wistfully on the men who were escaping in the last boat.



Nothing in his life  
Became him like the leaving it. He died  
As one that had been studied in his death—  
To throw away the dearest thing he owed  
As 'twere a careless trifle.

This season was the last of Dunlop Street under  
the management of Mr. Alexander.




CHAPTER XVI.

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MERCER SIMPSON, of Birmingham, opened a short but disastrous season in Dunlop Street, on October 30, 1851. In an introductory address, Simpson told the public that three months prior to that evening he had not thought of becoming a Glasgow manager, but that he had embarked in his new venture almost his all. He had been connected with the stage for twenty-five years, and from that night his services should be devoted to the best interests of the public.

A succession of "stars" followed. Brooke was amongst the first, and played during his engagement "Rob Roy." Then came the first appearance of Buckstone, accompanied by Mrs. Fitzwilliam. The unrivalled powers of Buckstone need no comment. Those who remember the matchless humour of his nasal drawl, the voice suggestive of distillation of fat thoughts and unctuous fancies, can alone appreciate a certain countryman's estimate of this actor's style when he remarked—"Yon's a capital actor. Pity he's got *t' asthma*." The talented couple played together in "Presented at Court," "Good for Nothing," "Rough Diamond," &c. Next came Wright, a comedian whose peculiar quaintness in Cockney humour we have never seen equalled, and



who was said to have rivalled Liston in his "Paul Pry." Wright was for many years the favourite comedian at the Adelphi, and preceded Toole. The veneration of the latter for his predecessor was so great that his only fear was, lest his (Toole's) powers of mimicry should lead him unconsciously into becoming a slavish copy. No one who ever saw Wright at this period can forget him as the Cockney Sportsman in Highland costume, benighted on the moors in "Harvest Home;" as "John Grumley" in "Domestic Economy," or as "Muster Grunnidge" in the "Green Bushes." In the latter piece his powers of gagging were so great, and increased to such an extent, that the scene in the third act—with "Jack Gong" (Paul Bedford), and "Wild Murtoogh" (O'Smith)—which occupied but ten minutes on the first night of the piece, played forty minutes before the end of its run. But this greatest of favourites with a London audience, failed to interest a Glasgow public.

Mercer Simpson made a most commendable opening of the purely dramatic season with his pantomime of "Baron Munchausen" and the "Honeymoon." Mr. W. H. Davenport appeared as the "Duke," Mr. Billington (now of Toole's corps) was "Montalban," Henry Vandenhoff "Rolando," and Henry Nye (afterwards for so many years manager of the Brighton Theatre) "Jacques." The cast included also George Webster, Belmore, White, Carroll, Cockerill, Rosa, Bennett, and Miss Kenneth. The pantomime had been produced under the direction of Mr. Garden (father of the present comedian) and

Mr. H. Hall. Davenport played for ten nights his famous "Marteau," "Carpenter of Rouen." Then came a short run of the dramatic version of "The Prophet." Miss Glynn, accompanied by James Bennett, played her usual round of characters, "Mrs. Haller," &c. "Guy Mannering" followed, with the well-known David Brown as "Henry Bertram." Simpson's laudable efforts, however, met with a very cold response from the public. The general opinion expressed was that all the pieces were well mounted, but that they were poorly played, and the season was brought to a summary close on February 22.

The Prince's on November 12, 1849, saw the winter season opened with "Der Freischutz," which introduced Mr. and Mrs. Donald King and Borrani. Lloyd and Cowall played "Box and Cox" to the "Mrs. Bouncer" of Mrs. Bland. Sims Reeves, who was now in the noontide of his fame, appeared in his matchless embodiment of "Edgar" to the "Bride of Lammermoor," of his future wife, Miss Lucombe. The evening of the 19th of November was for a long time one of special interest to old playgoers, for it witnessed the *début* of Mr. David Fisher, who, from being received with singular coldness on the first night of his appearance as "Captain Levant" in the "Haunted Inn," met with a reception on the second as "Tristram Fickle" in the "Weathercock," which established him as a Glasgow favourite till the end of his days. His next character was "Captain Poodle" in "Catching an Heiress," then "Ruy Gomez" in "Faint Heart Never Won Fair Lady."

Fisher, who was, perhaps, the most popular of Glasgow comedians, went at the end of his engagement with Glover to Charles Kean at the Princess's, and had an enviable career in London, in which city about six years ago he died.

The first pantomime Edmund Glover produced in Glasgow was "Mother Shipton," with scenery by Sam Bough, Connor, and Edmund Glover. The pantomimists were :—"Clown," Mr. George Parry ; "Columbine," Miss Massal ; "Harlequin," Signor Veroni ; "Pantaloon," Carlo Bolero. Morning performances, which had been first started in Glasgow by Miller, were now announced for the New Year holidays. Another announcement Mr. Glover made in connection with his pantomime might be followed with advantage by not a few of our managers of the present day. "In reply," he announced, "to several anonymous letters he begged to state that he was averse to all personal and local allusions in a pantomime ; and as to means and substance, poor's rates, &c., he thought people had more than enough of them at home." The pantomime was preceded on the 31st December by the "Actress of all Work," which was played by Miss Agnes Robertson, destined afterwards, whilst a member of the corps at the London Princess's, to become the ill-starred wife of the talented but erratic Dion Boucicault. The Queen's first visit to Glasgow afforded an opportunity for the subject of "Panorama," by Sam Bough, commencing with her Majesty's departure from Belfast, and ending with her landing on the Scottish shore. In April, Macready played for

his farewell performance, "Hamlet," "Werner," and "Iago," and shortly afterwards the season closed.

On July 7th, in the summer season, Mr. Houghton, afterwards known as one of the kindest, gentlest, and most courteous of acting managers, made his first appearance as "Grasp" to the "Paul Pry" of Mr. W. H. Murray (who shortly afterwards died). The season was remarkable for the production on July 14th of "Belphegor," the character of the "Mountebank" by Edmund Glover being pronounced one of the finest performances of the day—the "Madeline" on the occasion was Miss Clifton; and "Belphegor," after a run of three weeks, was afterwards followed by Glover's hardly less remarkable acting as "Robespierre."

On December 1st, 1851, the Bateman Children made their first appearance in Glasgow. Kate, who, fourteen years afterwards, became so famous as "Leah," played "Richmond," "Macbeth," "Paul Pry," &c., to her sister Ellen's "Richard," "Macduff," &c. On December 26th, Glover produced his second pantomime, "Flying Dragon of Peking," which introduced upwards of 100 performers.

With the accession of Edmund Glover to the management at Dunlop Street on October 3rd, 1852, an impetus was given to theatricals which had been unknown in Glasgow for many a season. The new manager came heralded not only by a well-earned fame from his career as actor and manager at the Prince's, but with the highest credentials from men high in literature and art, headed by Mr. (afterwards Sir Archibald) Alison, Macready, and Charles Kean.

The new manager's opinions as to the style of management which should be adopted in Glasgow were utterly opposed to the "cheese-paring" ones which had characterised the late Mr. Alexander. Glasgow, he conceived, as he often stated publicly, to be "a good theatrical city"—an opinion which has often since been endorsed by such artistes as Miss Faucit, the Keans, the Kendals, Sothorn, Irving, Toole, &c.

From long experience the new manager could feel the public pulse. He felt that with good acting, good pieces, good mounting, and a strictly careful management, the dramatic instinct was so strong that the theatre must be an irresistible attraction; and he resolved that Dunlop Street should be conducted after the model of the Edinburgh Theatre in the glory of the reign of the late W. H. Murray. When addresses were needful—at the beginning and close of the season—he would give them, but he would decline to obtrude them on the public. There was to be no further parleying with the "gods," or "Caudle Curtain Lectures" to the audience.

The theatre opened with Italian opera, with Grisi, Mario, and Lablache. Then came a series of "legitimate," in which Mrs. Edmund Glover made her first appearance as "Lady Teazle," her husband playing "Joseph," and David Fisher "Charles Surface." On November 18, Mackay played his last engagement in Glasgow. The year wound up with Glover's first pantomime in Dunlop Street, which was produced on December 27th, entitled "The Great Bed of Ware."

"Uncle Tom" was this year the London rage, and various adaptations were being played all over London and the provinces. Culling the best scenes from the best of the editions, Glover produced the Glasgow version on February 15th, 1853. The cast included Mr. Silver, who was pronounced an inimitable "Legree." Miss Fanny Bland was "Eliza;" Edmund Glover, "George Harris;" and Fitzroy, who on his first appearance in the earlier part of the season at the Prince's had been received somewhat coldly, made a distinct hit as "Uncle Tom." Mr. Sam Glover played "Topsy." Phelps shortly afterwards came down and played for a few nights in May, on the 27th of which month the season closed with the benefit of Edmund Glover. The bill was the "Corsican Brothers," in which Mr. Bruce Norton made his first appearance as "Colonna."

In the following September, Charles Mathews opened the season in a "Game of Speculation" and "Trying It On." He also played during his engagement in "The Lawyers," "High Pressure," and "Taking By Storm." The talents of Mathews as a comedian were always recognised in Glasgow, although he was not at all times to be relied on as a star specially attractive.

For some months, preparations for "Macbeth" had been on foot, and on October 4 the tragedy was produced on a scale equalling in splendour and magnitude that of the revival a short time before by C. Kean at the Princess's. Mr. Glover played "Macbeth," Powrie "Macduff," Geo. Webster "Duncan," Messrs. Fitzroy, Lloyd, and Cockerill



"The Three Weird Sisters," and Mrs. Hobson (the wife of a famous Irish comedian) "Lady Macbeth." "The Walking Gentleman" at this period was Mr. Edwin Villiers, the late well-known proprietor of a London music hall, and father of Miss Laura Villiers. The tragedy enjoyed an uninterrupted run of a month. "Macbeth" was followed by a revival of "As You Like It," with Miss Arden as "Rosalind," Powrie as the "Banished Duke," Edmund Glover as "Jacques," and Mr. Heir—who subsequently became the husband of Fanny Cathcart—as "Orlando," "Adam" being played by Fitzroy and "Touchstone" by Lloyd. Glover shortly afterwards produced "Richelieu," with himself as the "Cardinal," Silver as "Baradas," Fitzroy as "Joseph," and Miss Atkinson as "Julie." Mrs. Edmund Glover played "Katherine" to the "Petruchio" of David Fisher. The next of Glover's productions was (on November 21st) "King John," for which Miss Glynn was specially engaged for the "Lady Constance." The play ran till December 10th. After the Aztecs (the eagle-faced children) had appeared for six nights, Mr. Glover produced his second pantomime, on December 26, of "Whittington and his Cat."

On April 17th, 1854, Miss Frances Hughes (from the Lyceum), daughter of the well-known actor Henry Hughes, made her first appearance in Glasgow as "Little Pickle" in the "Spoiled Child," and shortly afterwards Mr. Gaston Murray, whom Miss Hughes married, was engaged to play "first walking gentleman." He was brother to Mr. Leigh Murray. Both Mr. and Mrs. Gaston Murray have late joined "the silent majority."

The summer season, which was opened by the Payne family in a serio-comic pantomime on the subject of "Robert Macaire," introduced to Glasgow Mr. Harcourt Bland. On Monday, July 3rd, 1854, he made his *début*, filling a gap which had been painfully felt since the departure of Mr. David Fisher for London. Mr. Bland opened as "Sir Charles Coldstream" in "Used Up," and made one of the greatest successes ever witnessed on a Glasgow stage. Alluding to his acting, the press of the following morning regarded his performance of the blasé baronet as establishing him "as by far the most sterling comedian Glasgow ever possessed as a member of a stock company." The notice went on to state—"Personally and physically this gentleman is all that could be desired. His acting, which is perfectly matured, is entirely free from those conventionalities which reduce the actor to a mimic. He was received throughout with warm and genuine applause, and effectually secured the approbation of a crowded house."

The subsequent career of Mr. Harcourt Bland revealed him to the public as something even beyond a successful actor. He was not alone a most satisfying artist, but he proved himself a deep theological student, an accomplished scholar, and a gentleman. Amid the glare and glitter of the garish scene this excellent actor found means to indulge in his favourite theme, which, strangely enough, like that of the late E. A. Sothern and another well-known Glasgow light comedian, was theology. He penned an exceptionally able and valuable commentary on

"the Apocalypse," and on that subject entered into a successful controversy with the famous Dr. Cumming. After his retirement from the Glasgow stage, Mr. Bland, at the suggestion of Mr. Edmund Glover, devoted himself to the teaching of elocution, which art he pursued with so much ardour that his labour and exertions on behalf of his pupils indirectly hastened his end. His appointments would prove, if proof were needed, the respect he had succeeded in gaining. For years he held the post of teacher of elocution to the Free Church College in Glasgow and also in Edinburgh, and was the first of the authorised teachers of the Art to the University. In the annals of the lives of actors scarcely can we call to mind one who left behind him more genial memories or a more untarnished name. He died suddenly but very peacefully in sleep on the 18th November, 1875.

September 25th (the company having returned from Paisley, where they had played during the race week) saw the production for the first time in Glasgow of the "Courier of Lyons," now known as the "Lyons Mail," with Glover as "Lesurcq and Dubosq," Harcourt Bland as "Couriol," Miss Frances Hughes "Julie," George Webster "Jerome," Cathcart "Dorval," Fitzroy "Choppard," Lloyd "Foinard," and Mrs. Rignold "Marie." October 11th witnessed the *début* of one who, as a juvenile actor, became a great favourite. This was George Vincent, who appeared that night as "Malcolm." The next grand production was that of "Ivanhoe," with Bland as "Ivanhoe," Fitzroy "Isaac of York," Vincent "Robin

Hood," "Rebecca" Miss Aitken, and the "Lady Rowena" Miss Caroline Maskell, sister to Mrs. Walter Baynham.

In February, during a short engagement, Miss Helen Faucit added to her repertoire "Lady Hester" in the comedy of "To Marry or Not to Marry." This engagement was followed by one with Wright, who played "Paul Pry," "Tilly Slowboy," and "Simmons" in the "Spitalfields Weaver;" and Mrs. R. H. H. Wyndham as "Miami" in "Green Bushes." Phelps then played for a few nights; then came Mrs. Seymour as "Peg Woffington," and Charlotte Saunders, for one night only, as "Hamlet!!" "Ophelia" by the afterwards famous Miss Herbert. In May, Phelps again came down, and, supported by Glover as "Marc Antony," and Swinbourne as "Cassius," played "Brutus." The theatre was then closed for a short time to make needful preparation for the military spectacle of "The Battle of the Alma."

Meantime the Prince's had scored great successes with Charlotte Saunders in Planche's burlesque of "Once upon a Time there were Two Kings," Webb in "The Rag Picker of Paris," and the Misses Cushman in "Romeo and Juliet" and in "Guy Mannering." In the latter Stenbridge Ray played "Henry Bertram," and Harry Webb "Dirk Hatterick."

CHAPTER XVII.

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THE benefit of Edmund Glover, which took place on the 30th April, 1855, is memorable from the fact that that evening chronicled the first appearance in Glasgow of Mr. J. L. Toole. Three years had elapsed since this, even then, favourite comedian had made his *début* as an actor. A twelvemonth before he had gone up from Edinburgh to London. Mr. Glover announced that "Mr. J. L. Toole, the popular comedian from the St. James's Theatre, London, would on that evening (30th April, 1855) make his first and only appearance in Glasgow." The programme consisted of "the tragedy of the Bridal," supported by Miss Aitken, Powrie, and Glover. Mr. Toole's part in the evening's performance was twofold. He played "Jacob Earwig" (Robson's then famous character) in "Boots at the Swan," and afterwards sang Robson's then popular ditty of "Villikins and his Dinah." The cast in the farce is interesting, and is made up of well-remembered names, two of which shortly afterwards figured prominently in London successes. "Cecilia Moonshine" was on the occasion played by Miss Herbert, subsequently the favourite comedienne and manageress of the St. James's, London; "Emily

Trevor" was Miss Mary Bland; "Sally," Miss Caroline Maskell (afterwards married to the late Mr. William M'Culloch, of Pickford's, "the London Scot"); "Betty," Miss Kate Carson; "Friskly," Mr. Harcourt Bland (who had acted on the occasion when Toole made his first professional bow at Dublin); "Henry Higgins," Mr. Fred Dewar, of "Captain Crosstree is My Name" fame; "Peter Pippin," Mr. Andrews, the late comedian of the "Beatrice" Company. A Madame Julie danced a *pas seul*, a popular violinist also played a Fantasia, and the evening wound up with the national drama of "Robert the Bruce."

The "Battle of Alma," which was produced on the 21st May, 1855, added another to the list of many artistic triumphs won during the management of Edmund Glover. In scenery and mounting this spectacle could scarcely have been eclipsed; and a happy thought displayed itself in an "act drop," on which was painted a map of the battlefield. As suggestive of the scale on which the drama was produced, it may be mentioned that three hundred and fifty soldiers, accompanied by a military band, were engaged to heighten the general effect.

After a five weeks' run, Mr. and Mrs. Leigh Murray played a short engagement in "Victorine," "Camp at Chobham," "Serious Family," and "His First Champagne." But to these exquisitely refined performances, the audiences were comparatively small. Miss Reynolds, Buckstone, and the Spanish Dancers followed the Murrays.

On November 4th Glover produced "Henry the

Eighth." In the mounting of this production Mr. Glover was said to have gone beyond himself. The spectator, it was said, whilst witnessing this gorgeous drama, seemed at the same time to be reading a suggestive page of history. Miss Aitken, in the character of "Katherine," was pronounced equal to Miss Glynn and Miss Faucit, and to come up to the critic's "shadowy remembrance of Mrs. Siddons." Mr. Glover was not very successful as the "King," and Mr. Powrie, it was thought, would have made a better "Buckingham" than "Cardinal." The press suggested, too, that George Webster, who was the "Campeius," should have played "Henry VIII.," and Glover "Wolsey." The spectacle ran for twelve nights.

On December 3 came the "Fall of Sevastopol," which proved a brilliant success. The pantomime this year was the Haymarket one of "Little Bo-Peep." Mr. Glover introduced on March 29, 1856, half-price to all parts of the house. The following April 14 saw the *début* of Mrs. W. H. Eburne, who made a most favourable impression as "Juila" in "The Hunchback," and also as "Jeanie Deans." Then came an admirable production of "The Lady of the Lake," which ran up to Whitsuntide.

On the 21st May an extraordinary fracas took place in the Prince's Theatre. A company of amateurs, hailing from Sunderland, had announced in very large type, "a grand dramatic entertainment, on which occasion would be performed Knowles' play of "The Wife." The sanguine expectations of the audience, which had been raised by the eulogiums on their merits, with which the amateurs had enriched

their bills, received a sudden check by the discovery that not one of the gentlemen connected with the representation seemed to be on anything approaching intimate terms with the words of his part. The usual tittering, however, soon swelled into unmistakable jeers, and shortly afterwards resulted in a tumult, in the midst of which Leonardo Gonzago came forward to entreat public indulgence on account of the short time which had been allowed the ladies and gentlemen for rehearsal. This was the signal for the bursting out of the pent-up fury of the outraged onlookers. Many of the latter clambered on to the stage. The actors flew in all directions calling loudly for HELP! and POLICE! The lights were extinguished, and in the midst of the confusion, some screaming, others shouting, the majority struggling to get out, the money-taker, who had been trusted by the amateurs "not wisely but too well," was discovered to have decamped with the entire evening's receipts.

Charles Pitt, David Fisher, Widdicombe, Sir William Don, Bart. (literally but not artistically the greatest of low comedians—his height was six feet four); Mr. and Mrs. W. Florence, George Vandenhoff, Julia St. George, the Cushmans, and the triumvirate of comedians, Lloyd, Cowell, and John Newcombe (afterwards manager of the Theatre Royal, Plymouth), preceded the production of the dramatised (Surrey) version of Mrs. Stowe's then popular but now all but defunct novel of "Dred," which was played for the first time in Glasgow on October 24th, with Glover in the title role. The pantomime "St. George and the Dragon," which followed on December 22,



was pronounced Glover's greatest success. The following February (1857) Miss Helen Faucit, during her annual engagement, added to her repertoire "Evadne." The play was considered heavy, and her performance of the heroine not equal to either her "Julia" or "Pauline."

Kean's revival at the Princess's of "Midsummer Night's Dream" probably suggested to Glover the idea of producing the fairy spectacle in Glasgow, and on March 3rd Shakespeare's fairy comedy was presented with a cast which included Glover as "Bottom," Powrie as "Theseus," Bland and Vincent as "Demetrius" and "Lysander," Fitzroy as "Quince," Lloyd as "Flute," Miss Maria Simpson (Mrs. Liston) as "Oberon," and Louise Keely (afterwards Mrs. Montague Williams) as "Titania." The production was but fairly successful owing to the non-dramatic nature of the play. Miss Faucit appeared on the 23rd. "Celeste" in the "Green Bushes," and Mr. and Mrs. Barney Williams occupied the boards in succession till May, when "Fraud and its Victims," which had been produced with great success some time previously at the Surrey, smelt for the first time the Glasgow footlights. The drama was a translation of "Les Pauvres de Paris," which was the groundwork of Reade's novel of "Hard Cash" and of Boucicault's drama of the "Streets of London."

On the 18th Mr. Glover, following in the line of his talented mother, who had on more than one occasion played "Falstaff" and also "Hamlet," attempted (for one night) to impersonate "Mrs.

Malaprop" in a scene from the "Rivals" (with Harcourt Bland as "Absolute"). Toole, accompanied by Charlotte Saunders, brought down from the Lyceum "Conrad and Medora," and was followed shortly afterwards by Sir William and Lady Don. The latter was the daughter of an old "Utility Man" at the London Adelphi, and she had captivated the heart of the lengthy baronet. Sir William during the engagement played the "Bailie" to Bland's "Rob Roy." A memorable first production in the following August was Tom Taylor's "Still Waters Run Deep," with Tom Mead as "John Mildmay;" George Vincent as "Hawkesly;" Fitzroy, "Potter;" Andrews, "Dunbilk;" Hamblin, "Gimlet;" Miss Cleaver, "Mrs. Sternhold;" and Miss Fanny Bland (no relation to Mr. Harcourt Bland), "Mrs. Mildmay." Mead's "Mildmay" took the city at once by storm.

When "Still Waters" had had its run Boucicault's version of "Faust and Marguerite" was produced on August 31st. The play had been for some time in preparation, and during their previous week's engagement Mead and Carlotta Leclercq had been busy in assisting Edmund Glover with the rehearsals. The cast was a strong one. "Faust," Vincent; "Valentine," Sam Glover; "Martha," Miss Cleaver. Mead had been specially engaged for "Mephistophiles," and Saker and Carlotta Leclercq came from the Princess's to sustain the original parts of "Seibel" and "Marguerite." The face, figure, and style of the latter was described as the beau-ideal of Goethe's heroine. The rise of the young actress had been rapid. She had first appeared in the metropolis in the

capacity of a pantomimist. As "Columbine," her grace and personelle had attracted the favourable notice of the Keans. They tried her powers as an actress in small parts, in which she at once showed herself such an expert that when "Faust and Marguerite" was tendered to the management the Keans at once fixed on Carlotta for the heroine. She played it to David Fisher's "Faust"—the character in which this actor first appeared in London, after leaving Glasgow. The Glasgow production proved an enormous success, and had an uninterrupted run of a month. Mead's "Mephistophiles" has, in the judgment of certain old Dunlopites, never yet been equalled. Mead, it may be briefly stated, returned shortly after this to London, and was leading man for many years at the Grecian Saloon. He subsequently joined the Lyceum as a member of that company. He died at the age of 70 two years ago.

On May 3rd, Miss Marriott, fresh from laurels won at the Surrey with Mr. Creswick, made as a star her first appearance in Glasgow, and met with a perfect ovation. She opened in "Fazio," and in her next impersonation Kate Saville, a charming actress, and niece to Miss Faucit, played "Juliet" to Miss Marriott's "Romeo." On the 15th, our still admirable evergreen "Jeanie Deans" appeared as "Hamlet," which, as a piece of acting, was, for one of her sex, one of the best the stage had seen. Her engagement was extended for a week longer; and then came two notable amateurs, Captain Disney Roebuck and Mr. Montagu Williams. The latter, now Judge Williams, was then a successful wooer, and shortly afterwards

married Louise Keeley, who had become a member of the stock company. After the usual round of stars had shone, Glover produced "Perourou, the Bellows Mender," the story on which Bulwer founded the "Lady of Lyons."

Mrs. Edmund Glover appeared (as she usually did at her husband's benefit) as "Mrs. Simpson" in "Simpson & Co.," and shortly afterwards as "Helen" in the "Hunchback," and the season finished with an engagement of Lloyd for twelve nights.

The pantomime for the winter season of '58 was "Sinbad the Sailor." The clown on the occasion was George Parry, notable for his "Dumb Man of Manchester," which character he played up to the end of the pantomime. Then Miss Goddard appeared in a round of characters, chiefly male impersonations, with an exceptional amount of success. Miss Faucit's appearance on April 21st as "Nina Sforza" was not pronounced a success. I note May 13th as signalling the *début* of Mr. Lindo Courtenay, who remained in Dunlop Street for four years, and who is now and has been for many years the highly-respected manager of more than one theatre in the English provinces. His first appearance was as "Stephen Plum" in "All that Glitters is not Gold." The evening of 22nd August saw the farewell benefit of Harcourt Bland. His "bill" on the occasion consisted of the "Love Knot." Miss Louise Keeley sang the old ballad of "Ever of Thee," and Mr. Bland took his final farewell as "Jeremiah Bumps" in "Turning the Tables." The farewell was on the occasion of Mr. Bland's leaving for London, where he had been

engaged to open at the Princess's as light comedian and stage manager. In the course of his address he alluded to the fact of his having taken a farewell a short time previously, prior to a contemplated visit to America, and after speaking in glowing terms of the management, he referred to the apathy which existed in Glasgow as to theatricals, and traced it to "that spirit of gloomy asceticism which seeks to transform the world into a region of mere utilitarianism ; which even trembles at the least display of wit and mirth ; which labours hard to represent Christianity as wholly antagonistic to those lighter arts and accomplishments which proceed from and accompany civilisation and refinement." He concluded by thanking the public for the brilliant response which had been made to his appeals on the occasion.

On October 12 a now very old favourite, but then a very young man, was presented by his father to the Glasgow public. This was Mr. Arthur Lloyd, who made his *début* as "Cornet Kavanagh" in the farce of the "Boarding School." Arrangements having been made with the Wigans, who had recently retired from the management of the Olympic, "Still Waters" was revived, with the stars as "Mildmay" and "Mrs. Sternhold." In a "Sheep in Wolves' Clothing," Wigan played for the first time "Jasper Carew," a part which had been written specially for him, but which he had at the last hour, through illness, been compelled to resign into the hands of George Vining. The pantomime of 1859 was that of the "Sleeping Beauty," which enjoyed a run of

sixty nights. After Kean's visit with Cathcart, Everett, and the Messrs. Chapman (Kean's nieces), in February, 1860, Benjamin Webster came with the most recent Adelphi success, "The Dead Heart," in which he was supported by Miss Aitken as the heroine, and Ashley as the "Abbe." Mr. Lindsay, an excellent actor, who was afterwards in Mr. Bernard's company at the Gaiety, made his first appearance as the "Count St. Valere." Webster, with Miss Aitken, acted also in Watts Phillips' drama of "Janet Pride."



CHAPTER XVIII.

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THE specialty of the season of 1860 was the spectacular drama of "The Indian Revolt, or the Relief of Lucknow," a piece which was compiled by Edmund Glover from many plays, and as an announcement ran, "written by *many* authors." It was produced with considerable care and great splendour. Two hundred performers were employed to give it due effect. There were in it, besides, "gorgeous processions, introducing a perfect menagerie of elephants, camels, bulls, &c.," and the *tout ensemble* was regarded by the Glasgow public as one of the most complete which had ever been witnessed since the days of Seymour's "Aladdin." The cast is memorable. In it the name of Henry Irving appeared for the first time in Glasgow. The young actor, then but two and twenty years of age, had been specially engaged by Mr. Glover to play "Prince Jung Bahadour." It is generally supposed that in this character Irving made his first bow to a Glasgow audience. This is, however, a mistake. His own account is—"When I came to Glasgow (which I did from Dublin) to attend the rehearsals for 'The Indian Revolt,' I was surprised and indignant to find myself cast for some character in the 'Warlock of the Glen,' which was

to be played as a Saturday night 'attraction' prior to the 'Revolt' on the Monday. As I had made my mark as an actor in Dublin, where I had been a great favourite, you can imagine what I felt when I found myself announced merely as a Mr. Irwin—they couldn't even spell my name correctly—but I played the part nevertheless." The remainder of the cast of "The Indian Revolt" included Miss Aitken ("Jessie Brown"), Henry Ashley ("Captain Cameron"), E. Fletcher ("Geordie Cameron"), and Sam Glover ("M'Allister"). The rest of the characters were in the hands of Messrs. Charles Vernon, F. Glover, C. Bland, Josephs, Lindsay, Hamblin, W. Lowe, and Davie Stewart; Misses Desborough, Fanny Josephs, and Barry. The spectacle was an enormous success, and ran from the 16th April till the 15th of May. Mr. Irving remained as light comedian during the entire season, playing such parts as "Sir Charles Howard" ("Little Treasure"), "Mr. Aubrey" ("Curious Case"), "D'Aubigne" ("The Man in the Iron Mask"), and "Macduff" and the "Juveniles" in the Shakespearian drama. "The Indian Revolt" was succeeded by an engagement of the Pyne-Harrison Troupe and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Mathews. On the 4th June the Brothers Webb appeared for the first time in the "Comedy of Errors," bringing with them the sisters, Mrs. Webb and Annie Parker, for the "Antipholes."

The winter season of 1860 and 1861, which commenced on October 1, was heralded ominously by an address from Mr. C. G. Houghton, in the course of which he referred to his being then but the deputy for Mr. Edmund Glover, who, it was thought, was




happily recovering from what had been a dangerous, but which unhappily proved a fatal, illness. Three weeks afterwards, on the 24th October, the theatre was suddenly closed. Edmund Glover had died that morning at half-past nine, unexpectedly and peacefully, at the residence of his old friend, Mr. R. H. Wyndham, in Edinburgh, to which he had been removed from the cottage belonging to the former at Luss. At first the change seemed very beneficial, and the hopes of his loving wife and family had been brightened with the prospect of his recovery, but he suddenly, on the evening before he died, grew worse. Medical aid was summoned, but was found of no avail, and at half-past nine the following morning, surrounded by his family, Time rang down for him, at the mandate of the Universal Prompter, the final curtain. If any proof has been needed of the respect in which this admirable actor, excellent manager, tender husband, and loving father was held, it was shown in the list of those who made up the mournful procession to Sighthill Cemetery. Scarcely a citizen of repute was absent from it. Both on and off the stage, it was confessed, Edmund Glover "was a man, take him for all in all, we ne'er should look upon his like again." Those who knew him best, loved him most. Kind, considerate, generous, benevolent, and unostentatious, his dependents were numerous, yet comparatively unknown. One of his last acts was to give the free use of his theatre for a benefit to Mr George Webster, who had long been unable to appear in consequence of illness. The manager-actor's life had been devoted to the raising of his art, and his death left a void which none have since filled.

On the conclusion of the pantomime of "Little Red Riding Hood" in February, 1861, Miss Faucit came to Dunlop Street, supported by Mr. Swinbourne, an actor graceful, powerful, and effective, and possessed of a singularly sympathetic voice. The star opened as "Lady Macbeth." Miss Faucit played only four nights in the week, and during her twelve nights' engagement appeared as "Julia" ("Hunchback"), "Rosalind," "Iolanthe" ("King Rene's Daughter"), and "Beatrice" ("Much Ado About Nothing"). It was in connection with this engagement that, accompanied by Mrs. Baynham (Miss Fanny Maskell as "Helen"), I, as "Modus," on the 17th February, made my first appearance in Glasgow. The memory of the principal members of the *corps* being still green to middle-aged playgoers, the writer will perhaps be exempted from the charge of egoism if he ventures to describe briefly the scene of his first morning on the stage, after his arrival.

At ten o'clock I made my way from the Parliamentary Road, where we lodged, to Dunlop Street, and found myself in front of the handsome theatre, over the portico of which, if I remember rightly, was on one side the bust of Shakespeare, and on the other that of the late J. H. Alexander. Opposite to the theatre were a group of actors standing on the pavement in front of the cosy little tavern called the Garrick's Head. The "call" was for the rehearsal of "Macbeth." As I was looking about, not knowing where to find the stage door, and hesitating whether I should ask my way of one of the actors, who were strangers to me, or inquire of a white-headed old


gentleman who stood at the box door entrance, and who, I found afterwards, was the time-honoured Mr. Muir, a tall and very handsome lady, who held by the hand two little girls—all clothed in deep mourning—came up and introduced herself to me. This was Mrs. Edmund Glover with her two daughters, Kate and Fanny. We went together down the little narrow lane which ran along the north side of the theatre, and in a few minutes I had groped my way through the dark vestibule and up some narrow flights of steps on to the dimly-lighted stage; then crossing it again, up a flight of stairs, I reached the office of the acting manager, Mr. C. G. Houghton (one of the kindest-hearted and most considerate of men), and that of his assistant, then a very thin and smooth-faced young man, Mr. Alexander Wright; (the latter has now for many years been highly esteemed as manager of the Theatre-Royal, Greenock. To Mr. Wright the public were at that time mainly indebted for the *monstre programmes* which were then the order of the Saturday nights.) We went down stairs on to the stage. Here I was introduced by Mr. Houghton to a tall, stoutish man, whose broad shoulders were surmounted by a wide Scotch face with small twinkling eyes. This was the stage manager, Bruce Norton, at once the driest and most irresistibly funny of Scotch comedians, and an enormous favourite with the generality of actors, both on and off the stage. Coming out of the dusky gloom at the back of the scenes there emerged a man of about 50 years of age, whose short, crisp black hair curled round a rather low forehead, surmounting a

ruddy face. He was attired in a Highland cape, and wore a deep hatband, as I subsequently learned, for the late Edmund Glover. This was the late J. B. Fitzroy. I met for the first time a singularly quiet and unassuming little man, who was standing at the wings talking to a dapper little man and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Glover. The dapper little man, was, I fancied, somewhere between 50 and 60 years of age, nearer the latter. We soon got into conversation, and I remarked that of all the actors I had hitherto met this little gentleman spoke the least about himself. This was the late H. F. Lloyd. Then came sailing down in full sweep (for I can find no more expressive word for his general walk) a boyish-faced looking individual, with his hands locked on to his wrists, and a placid, self-contented smile. This was the irrepressible and immortal George Hamblin. Seated in the Green Room were the remainder of the company—Mr. Gresham, Mr. Duff, Miss Laurence, and a lady of exceptionally refined manners and appearance, then getting a little into the “sere” of life, Miss Cleaver. A shabbily-dressed and dissipated-looking young man, Mr. Charles Brand, and his wife (a beautiful young woman) were present. Charles Stewart, the prompter, soon gave the word, “Beginners!” and a short time afterwards on came Powrie—always punctual and perfect. He rehearsed “Macduff.” I found him one of the simplest-hearted and kindest of *confreres*—a hater of cant in any form, and a generous helper to all young and careful actors. In the orchestra the late Mr. Smythe, then a very mild spoken, very nervous, and bald-headed young man,



conducted; the first violin was that good-hearted Mulatto, little Willie Shaw; the second, Mr. Leveston, no less courteous; the violincello was Mr. Fisher, uncle of "David." Our call boy was Tommy Watson, now, unfortunately, a low comedian at (when I last saw him) a Vinegar Hill show. Taken up to the wardrobe, I was introduced to the costumier, Mr. John Guy, for many years a most trustworthy "fixture" in Glover's Theatre.

Miss Faucit's engagement was followed by one with a Mr. Gardiner Coyne. In a round of Irish characters he proved himself but a very weak imitator of an actor who was shortly to appear,—John Drew. On the 18th March the Keans, accompanied by their nieces, the Misses Chapman, Cathcart, and Everett, appeared. After a week's closing for the "preachings," the theatre opened with an adaptation by Charles Webb of "The House on the Bridge of Notre Dame," in which Mr. Duff sustained the dual role of the "Brothers," and the present writer a melodramatic villain—so intended by the author, but it was played by the writer as a light comedy part. On Monday we produced "The Woman in White," with Mr. Lindo Courtenay as the hero, Mrs. Baynham as "Laura Glyde," Mrs. Charles Bland as "Ann Catherick," Hamblin "Mr. Fairlie," Fitzroy "Fosco," Gresham as "Glyde." We ran the piece during the week alternately with "The House on the Bridge." Charles Mathews opened on the 29th. With his characteristic nonchalance, he seldom or ever attended rehearsals, and the pieces throughout his engagement would have been lamentable failures, but for his incomparable



acting at night, and the ready ease with which he got various members of the company out of various bangles, caused by his non-attendance at rehearsals; and by their not knowing what he meant to do or even say, for he seldom stuck to the words of his part. On the occasion of his benefit at this time he played "Aggravating Sam." It was acted most deplorably, through Mathews' non-attendance at rehearsal, but he seemed himself quite surprised that it had gone as well as it had done. "What d'ye think of that?" he said to me, pointing triumphantly towards the audience, as the curtain fell to very faint plaudits. "There! the Curtain down! and without the goose! (hiss)." Any other star would probably have vented his disgust, at the apathy of the audience, on the company. Not so with Mathews. He was never put about. If he was cut out of some of his best lines through an actor being imperfect, he would at the end of the piece quietly put his hands in his pockets, and nodding in the direction of the culprit, remark—"Nice man that! What's his name? Sort of man you'd like to take tea with." In the instance of "Aggravating Sam," I ventured to remonstrate with him on his not having given the company a fair chance in consequence of his not coming to rehearsal. "My dear fellow," he replied, clapping me on the shoulder, "that's a piece which wouldn't go smoothly with fifty rehearsals. If you can't get it right with fifty, what's the use of bothering yourself about one?" Then he quietly strolled into his dressing-room, lighted a cigar, and was seen no more till the next night. To the easy way in which he

took things he owed probably his exceptional vitality, which, even when he was seventy-three years of age, had not deserted him. As an instance of this, during his last engagement in Glasgow at the Gaiety, he was, whilst playing "My Awful Dad," taken seriously and suddenly ill. His indistinct articulation at first had ended in a swoon. The doctor who had been called in at once ordered him to be taken home, and predicted that this most accomplished artiste on the stage would never act again. Mathews, however, who declined even to take a little brandy to revive him, gradually recovered full consciousness, struggled to his feet, and finished the piece. Next morning, when Mr. Bernard, the manager, fearing the worst, called to inquire after Mathews, he was asked into the private room of the latter, where he found him not only up and dressed, but engaged in painting a little picture in water colours, which he presented to his inquirer as a *souvenir* of the previous evening's "entertainment." Mathews, though one of the most brilliant "stars" in the social as well as the dramatic firmament, made few friends. Out of London he was scarcely known in private life. He was anything but "fast" either in his conversation or habits, and his temperance in every respect was one of the secrets of his juvenility, which accompanied him to the day of his death, at the age of seventy-four. Almost his last words were a joke. The clergyman had attended him, and left as Mathews was sinking into stupor. In the meantime another individual in a white cravat had taken the minister's place. Mathews woke, saw dimly the white tie of some one standing at the bed-

side, pressed the hands of the latter, and to that individual's surprise fervently thanked him for his ministrations. Opening his eyes wider he quietly put the astonished individual aside, and calling his stepson Charles—Mathews, the barrister—said, "I've made a nice mess of it, Charles. Instead of the Parson, I've blessed the *Waiter*! But," he added, "I suppose it's the last mistake I shall make."





## CHAPTER XIX.

MISS JULY DALY, a very clever American actress, opened the summer season on June 3rd, 1861, with "Our Female American Cousin," in which Mr. Edward Price made his first appearance as "Gerald Appleby." On June 17 "Plot and Passion" was played, with Mrs. Baynham as "Marie de Fontagnes," Edward Price as "De Neuville," Fitzroy as "Demarrettes," and Mr. Gresham as "Fouché." On the Monday following, "Lost and Found," a drama founded on "Nicholas Nickleby," and written by myself, was produced, and enjoyed a favourable run. Price played "Nicholas;" Lloyd, "Squeers;" Hamblin, "Ralph Nickleby;" Fitzroy, "Newman Noggs;" Mrs. Sennett, "Mrs. Nickleby;" Miss Laurence, "Kate;" and Mrs. Baynham, "Smike." "Mantalini" and "John Browdie" were, in this version, omitted. The play ended with the "Death of Smike." "Lost and Found," which ran the week, was supplemented by the "Balance of Comfort," "Ladies' Battle," and "The Miller and his Men." On Monday, July 1, Mr. James Rogers (better known as Jemmy Rogers) made his first bow to a Glasgow audience in "A Race for a Widow," and also as "Turby" in "The Goose with the Golden Eggs." Wednesday saw for the first time in our city Byron's

burlesque of "Aladdin," in which Rogers as the "Widow Twankey" made a hit so great that the burlesque ran every evening to the end of the engagement. Mrs. Fred Glover (Miss Wilmott) played "Aladdin," Hamblin the "Emperor," F. Glover the "Vizier." The next engagement was that of the well-known actor (afterwards manager of the "Prince of Wales") Mr. John Coleman. His own piece called "Catherine Howard" was produced, and won much favour with the "gods." As "Catherine" Mrs. Edward Price made her first appearance, and afterwards played the "Queen," with Mr. Coleman as "Ruy Blas," myself as "Don Sallust." On the Monday following, Charlotte Saunders brought down "Kenilworth." On the 19th, Widdicombe opened on the occasion of my first benefit in "Old Joe and Young Joe" and the "Two Poults." The farce ran the entire engagement. During it, Widdicombe appeared in two of his most serious characters. These were "Capias Shark" in "A Bird in Hand," and also as "Daddy Hardacre," in both of which he acted most powerfully. His style has been handed down to the present generation in that of Mr. J. L. Toole. Our trump card, however, which we had held sometime in hand, was to be played, and a magnificent one it proved. This was no other than the "Colleen Bawn."

The drama proved one of the most thorough old-fashioned successes ever witnessed in Glasgow. The cast was as follows:—"Hardress Cregan," Courtney; "Kyrle Daly," myself; "Father Tom," H. Mellon; "Myles-na-Coppaleen," T. H. Glenney; "Corrigan,"

Holston ; "Bertie O'More," Fenton ; "Eily O'Connor," Mrs. Sloan ; "Ann Chute," Mrs. Buckingham White ; "Mrs. Cregan," Mrs. Charles Boyce ; "Sheelah," Mrs. W. H. Sennett ; last, but not least, "Danny Mann," Sam Emery. The piece, with some slight alterations in the cast, ran till the end of the season. During its run a Miss De Courcy took the place of Mrs. C. Boyce. Mellon played "Danny Mann" (Emery being obliged to leave for London), and Mr. Dan Leeson took Mellon's place as "Father Tom," and Mrs. Walter Baynham played the "Colleen."

With the opening of our winter season of 1861-62 (November 4th) came J. L. Toole. He played then in Adelphi dramas, such as the "Harvest Home," "Willow Copse," "The Writing on the Wall," &c., which have (we say it regretfully) long been laid on the shelf, a fact principally arising from the system of stock companies having been abandoned. The opening drama was Boucicault's "Willow Copse" and the farce of "The Pretty Horsebreaker," in which Mrs. Baynham played Bella Sunnysides. He also produced "Blue Beard" (burlesque), in which he was excruciatingly funny. When Toole's twelve nights' engagement came to an end, John Drew, who had but a few months before made his *début* in Dublin, made his first appearance to a wretchedly thin house in the "Irish Ambassador," followed by the "Irish Emigrant," "O'Callaghan," and "Handy Andy." Since the days of Tyrone Power his equal had not been seen, and I have never witnessed so finished a "stage Irishman" since. His career, however, was, though brilliant, painfully short.

It was during the second week of Drew's engagement I heard that Bruce Norton, who had long been ailing, was dangerously ill, and next day the news was brought to the theatre that this genuine comedian, most humorous of men, and greatest of practical jesters (despite an occasional coarseness), was dead. "Tragedy" followed in this instance "Life's Farce." My diary records that on November the 27th I, as Stage Manager, read the forthcoming pantomime in the green room to the company, and afterwards attended the funeral of Bruce Norton. It proved a sadly memorable affair! He had lodged in Stockwell Street in a couple of narrow, dimly-lighted rooms, one of which was made indistinguishably more gloomy that morning by the coffin containing his remains which was laid upon the table. Several of his relations were present, including poor Bruce's two brothers, both Glasgow merchants—Bruce Norton was a Glasgow man—and also a few actors. All sat for some time in that peculiar silence which is never felt so powerfully as in the presence of death. At length some uneasiness began to be displayed. Anxious eyes were cast in the direction of the door. No clergyman appeared. Through some unfortunate malarrangement no minister had been sent for. That all things might be done decently and in order, it was suggested that some one present should conduct a short religious service. Every non-professional present having declined, a chapter was read and an extempore prayer offered up by one of poor Bruce's fellow-actors. There was a pitiless snow-storm raging, as the lonely procession followed him to the grave—

where again, through some reprehensible oversight, another scene occurred. The grave was found too narrow to receive the coffin, and had to be considerably widened before the coffin could be lowered.


Miss Aitken, prior to trying her fortunes as a dramatic reader in Australia, played a week's farewell performances. The character in which she was to take her farewell was "Julia" in the "Hunchback." The occasion was memorable in more respects than one. Tom Powrie was at the time the "leading man," although he never played in the ordinary round of melodramas. A Mr. Mortimer Murdoch was a species of "second man," who was engaged to share the melodramatic lead. Powrie's nervousness had been for years proverbial. He felt himself unable to study any new part, and although four weeks' notice had been given him to appear as "Master Walter" to Miss Aitken's "Julia," he at the last moment was too timid to make the attempt, and Murdoch, who was to have played "Sir Thomas," appeared as the "Hunchback" instead. Miss Aitken during this engagement played "Jeannie Deans" to the "Duke of Argyle" of Mr. H. Courte (Mr. Henry Cooke the elocutionist).

The next week was spent in rehearsals of the pantomime of "Jack the Giant Killer," which was underlined for the following Monday, the 15th December. This was, however, postponed in consequence of the death on the 14th of the Prince Consort. On the 17th it was produced, and received most warmly by what was always on the first night, at that time, a poor house. The cast was an excellent

one. Mr. Fenton was the "King," Mrs. F. Glover "Jack," the "Giant" Hamblin. The "Clown" was Nicolo Denlin, was well known as one of the funniest of pantomimists, but was, strangely enough, one of the most melancholy of men. His sadness was caused by a constant brooding on theological doctrines, on the subject of which he had more than one interview with some of the most eminent of the Glasgow clergy. He would stand at the wings ready to go on in the comic scenes with the most dejected of countenances. He seldom or ever smiled off the stage, and gave directions as to the fun to his son Paul (the "Pantoloon") in the most gloomy tones. His thoughts were always on the "after state," his soul's salvation, and the attributes of the Divine Being. The future life engrossed the whole of his thoughts, and he was never talkative except upon dogmatic subjects. "Was Calvin right?" If Predestination was true, where, then, was the rationality of giving a man "free will?" Questions like these he would break off with—"Now, Joey! look out, here's the Bobby"—he would run on to the stage, tumble, shout, and go through all the business of the scene. Then, coming off again, with the old look of gloomy distrust, he resumed the subject of theology at the point he had left off.

Whilst the pantomime was running at the Royal the burlesque of "Lalla Rookh" was played at the Princes. "Delicate ground," "Little Toddlekins," "Ladies' Battle," "Mateo Falcone," and several dramas preceded "Jack" at Dunlop Street. In the February following G. V. Brooke made his first ap-

pearance in Glasgow since his return from Australia. He was accompanied by the late Richard Younge, subsequently manager of the Tyne Theatre and a well-known "Eccles;" and an excellent actress, Miss Avonia Jones, whom Brooke shortly afterwards married. She was devotedly attached to her accomplished husband, and survived his loss barely more than eighteen months. The trio opened on February 10th, Younge playing the "Juveniles" and "Seconds." The business, however, was anything but good. The public had lost confidence in the reigning "star"—one of the best-hearted, but most erratic of men. No one could ever be sure of him. He would begin the play perfectly sober, but would get hopelessly drunk before the curtain fell. In some cases the audience were introduced to an unrehearsed effect. Totally oblivious of the presence of his auditory in front, he frequently mingled his own personal remarks on the acting of those around him with the text. One evening when we were finishing "Othello," and he was reeling up to the bed where his smothered victim lay, he gave a prolonged howl of "O—— O—— O Desdemona," when he suddenly looked round and his eye caught Mr. J. C. Mathews, who was playing "Montano," laughing. Everybody both on and off the stage was more or less doing the same, for poor Brooke was hopelessly but ludicrously staggering about all over the scene. Brooke, however, singled out the unhappy Mathews. Fixing a vacant stare at the culprit, he pointed to the bed and hiccupped mournfully, but audibly, to the astonishment of the audience, "Look here, Mr.



Mathews, do you see this? Do you think, sir, *this* is a *laughing matter?*" When, however, Brooke was himself, he acted magnificently, and was the most gentle, genial, and unassuming of men. When he was intoxicated his temper was ungovernable. Those who knew him best loved him most, and always showed pity for what the public pronounced, unpardonable. Not an unkind word had any to say of poor 'Gus. He was nobody's enemy but his own. His name will—if we accept perhaps "Othello"—never be coupled with those of really great Shakspearian actors, but in such parts as "Mathew Elmore" ("Love's Sacrifice"), "Master Walter" ("Hunchback"), and in a little drama called "Dreams of Delusion," founded on the tale of the cure of madness being effected by the re-enactment of a past incident which caused it, I have never seen his equal. He was by birth a gentleman and by education (at Trinity College, Dublin) a scholar.

Our "production" this season was Falconer's Irish drama of the "Peep o' Day," which was played for the first time in Glasgow in March 3rd, 1862. Mr. Boucicault has been considered the first to introduce the present system of travelling companies, although the Haymarket Company had, as I have previously stated, appeared with almost the full corps in 1849, and even Samuel Foote had eighty years before that, brought down his entire company from the Haymarket to Edinburgh. The present system of bringing down a play with a complete cast was then but in perspective. The members of travelling *corps* eight and twenty years



ago had to depend upon aid from those of the stock resident company. In the "Peep o' Day," as in the "Colleen Bawn," not more than six or seven artistes were brought from London. These were Miss Heath (who was shortly afterwards married to Mr. Wilson Barrett), one of the most refined of actresses. She played "Mary Grace." Miss Clifford was the "heroine;" Mr. Harry Sinclair, "Harry Kavanagh;" Mr. J. Barrett (from the Princess's and Lyceum), the "Irish Priest;" the late Mr. M'Intyre, the "Squireen;" Mr. T. C. Harris (from Sadlers Wells), "Black Mullens;" and Mr. Stainslaus Calhaem, under whose direction the drama was produced, "Barney O'Toole." "Mr. Grace" was played by Fitzroy, and "Blind Paddy" by Hamblin. The scenery for the drama, painted by Glover, was magnificent, and the arrangement of the Irish fair and dance in the second act would almost of itself have been sufficiently novel to ensure for the play a very long run. It was not, however, as a whole so successful as the "Colleen Bawn."

On April 7th, John Brougham, a clever Irish comedian, opened to a wretched house as "Micawber," playing also during his engagement "Captain Cuttle" in "Dombey & Son." He produced, too, an excellent comedy, although not a success, called "Playing with Fire." Meantime the cosy little Princes' had been doing very good business with a modest stock company. It had reopened on December 2nd, under the stage management of Mr. Stainslaus Calhaem, with "The Pride of the Market" and the burlesque of the "Maid and the

Magpie," in which Mr. and Mrs. Fred Glover were very successful. The only "star"—and that was but a demi-one—was Miss Marion Taylor. The "old man" was Mr. Bellair, and Mr. H. Courte played the "lead." The next "production" of the season was Boucicault's "Octoroon," for which the author sent down a very strong cast under the direction of Mr. R. Phillips, the stage manager at the London Adelphi. Mr. Delmon Grace, a capital actor from America, was "Salem Scudder;" Mr. Marcus Elmore, "M'Cluskey;" Mr. H. Mellon, "Pete;" Mrs. Eburne, "Zoe;" Mrs. Buckingham White, "Dora Sunnyside;" Mrs. Charles Boyce, "Mrs. Peyton;" Hamblin, "Captain Ratts;" T. H. Glenney, "Wah-motee;" Dobson, "Colonel Poindexter;" and Miss Bella Murdoch, the "boy." As a strong attraction we shortly afterwards played with "The Octoroon" the "Colleen Bawn," Mr. Elmore taking Emery's place as "Danny Man;" and Mr. H. Mellon resuming "Father Tom" (an incomparably characteristic performance). Mr. Fitzroy appeared as "Corrigan;" and Mrs. Eburne, "Eily O'Connor."



CHAPTER XX.

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AFTER a brief engagement, Mr. Charles Calvert made his first bow to a Glasgow audience in the "Island Home," and on the following night appeared in his own translation of the drama of "Rube, the Showman," which he played to perfection. His style was not original; it was modelled on that of Charles Kean's in regard to voice, gait, and action. The next week Calvert acted with similar success in the "Hive of Life," playing with the drama the burlesque of "Esmeralda." We next produced, with scant success, a wretched transpontine drama called "The Pirates of Savannah," for which Mr. Henry Loydall was engaged. The attraction of that week was, however, the charming singing and acting of Julia St. George in Planché's extravaganza of the "Invisible Prince," which was played as an afterpiece to "The Pirates." Then we revived "Aladdin," with Lloyd as the "Widow." Chas. Rice came down and made a tremendous hit as "Christopher Chirrup" (his original character) in the drama of "Jessie Vere;" Mrs. Edward Price playing the heroine. As an attraction an engagement was made with a Herr Tolmaque, who professed to outdo the then famous Davenport Brothers in the unfastening of any knot, without

visible means, his hands being secured and his arms bound to a chair by one of the audience. He challenged anyone to bind him so that he could not extricate himself—shielded by an extinguisher-looking covering—in one minute. On the second night he made a most dismal failure—a sailor having bound him to the chair and tied him so that the “spirits” (!) were unable to untie the knot.

On August 2nd Miss Amy Roselle (now Mrs. Arthur Dacre) made her first appearance as a very pretty little girl, who came to play seconds to her brother, Master Percy Roselle, a child-actor who acted very cleverly a round of parts—the last act of “Macbeth” and “Richard,” &c. They appeared together also in a little piece called “My Own Blue Bell,” and in a variety of characters in “The Day after the Fair,” and in each and all of their characters were a pronounced success.


In London at this time Sothern was taking the town by storm as “Lord Dundreary;” and Charles Rice played a little farce called “Lord Dundreary Settled at Last,” giving in it not a very faithful but a very funny imitation of the great original. With this and “The Colleen Bawn” we wound up the summer season.

Great changes marked the opening of our next winter campaign. The stock company had undergone a wonderful transformation, one which had been arranged under the supervision of Mr. Houghton, assisted by Mr. Charles Calvert, who was now engaged as stage manager. With the exception of the quartette of Powrie, Fitzroy, myself, and Lloyd,

scarcely one of the staff who had figured in Glasgow for many years before, remained. We opened on the 1st of September with "The Hunchback," with the following cast:—"Julia," Miss Kate Saville; "Helen," Miss Henrietta Watson, a young and excellent *soubrette*, who was subsequently to figure as a prominent character in more than one of the novels of William Black; "Master Walter," Charles Calvert; "Sir Thomas Clifford," Powrie; "Master Wilford," Mr. W. H. Kendal (his first appearance); "Master Gaylove," Mr. Beveridge Heartwell; "Modus," Mr. Walter Baynham. "The Lady of Lyons," with Powrie and Miss Saville, served to introduce Mr. A. Alexander, who made his first appearance as "Beauseant;" Fitzroy, "Damas;" Beveridge, "Gasper;" Mrs. Wallis (mother of Mrs. Lowe), "Widow Melnotte;" Miss Lavis, as "Madame Deschappelles." Wednesday saw the company in "Macbeth." This was succeeded by the "Merchant of Venice" (with Powrie as "Gratiano"), "Othello," and "King John." Mr. Calvert's admirable stage arrangement of these pieces drew enormous houses, and, coupled with the burlesque of "Perseus and Andromeda," the business soon became better than had been known for years. We now revived "Faust and Marguerite," with Calvert as "Mephistopheles" and Miss Saville as "Marguerite." Miss Saville shortly afterwards left the company, and her place was filled by Miss Agnes Markham, who was then playing in the burlesque. The production of the legitimate alone without the aid of stars carried us on fairly up to the "Preachings" in October, and the pleasantest

memories of the opening of the following season will be always revived by calling to mind such productions as "Still Waters Run Deep," "Much Ado about Nothing," and "The Fool's Revenge," in which Miss Rollason (now Mrs. Nye Chart, the respected manageress of the Theatre Royal, Brighton) made her first appearance on 13th October.

On the 15th October, Mrs. Charles Calvert made her first appearance as "Rosalind." "The Jewess" was also revived magnificently, and ran till November 8th. But the best stage management is not exempt from accidents, and the finest tragic acting has occasionally its comic side. One evening we were playing "Hamlet." Powrie was the "Prince," and Alexander played the "King." Now it is a remarkable fact that as a rule the death of the "King," even under ordinary circumstances, always raises a laugh, and tends considerably to jeopardise the success of the ending of the tragedy. Various modes have consequently been from time to time devised to, if possible, make the close of that monarch's life convey a stern moral. Sometimes the "Hamlet" will dare him in pantomime to moral combat, and then disarming him, inflict the mortal stab, and get him hustled off the stage. Fechter, used to surround the unfortunate monarch with guards, as he fell headlong from the throne. This latter symbol of royalty is invariably set in the centre of the stage, and is consequently the most prominent feature of the scene. Powrie's idea was in the present instance to render the throne as little conspicuous as possible. He arranged for it to be erected on the right-hand



side, near the wings. Then he designed to stab "Claudius," and for the "King" to fall prostrate on his face on the steps leading up to the throne. Every arrangement was duly carried out at rehearsal; but, unfortunately, the Property man had not taken into consideration two things—the one was the strength of the back of the throne chair, and the other the extra force which, in the excitement of the moment, Mr. Powrie might impart to the fatal thrust. "Laertes" (myself) had been duly despatched, and was lying head foremost to the audience. Powrie then made such a rush at Mr. Alexander, that the hilt of the sword coming with tremendous force against the edge of the back of the throne chair the latter gave way, and tipped up, carrying upwards the slain monarch and his legs with it. It got fixed between the "two wings," and Mr. Alexander, being at the time quite powerless to extricate himself from his embarrassing position, remained with his regal robe thrown up over him, almost as high as his head, and discovering beneath it a pair of red-worsted tights, over which were tucked up Mr. Alexander's street trousers. To complete the effect, the laughter of the audience caused "Laertes," who had died a few minutes before, to look up in order to ascertain what was the matter. On this unexpected *denouement* the curtain fell.

The very latest edition of the "Lady of Lyons" was played admirably with Lloyd as the "Widow Melnotte," Miss Reinhardt as "Pauline," Hamblin as "Damas," and "Claude," Miss Wilmott. This

was followed by the burlesque of "Esmeralda," also very successful, with Miss Reinhardt in the title rôle, Lloyd as the "Monk," and Fred Glover as the "Hunchback." I must not omit to mention "The Dumb Man of Manchester," which was at this time played frequently on a Saturday night, with Fred Glover as "Tom"—a performance which was said to have equalled that of George Parry. In July, Miss St. George, as a "star," made a great success in "Graceful, or the Fair One with the Golden Locks." "Lucidora," the fair one, was played by Miss Wilmott; and "King Lachrimosa" (a character afterwards immortalised by Alfred Davis' singing in it of "Likkity Longsha") by Fitzroy. Fitzroy made a signal success when we revived for him the "Porter's Knot," with himself as "Sampson Burr," Mrs. Sennett as "Mrs. Burr," Mathews as "Augustus," Myself as "Scatter," Hamblin the "Captain," Fred Glover "Smirk," Dobson "Bob," and Miss Reinhardt "Alice." Charles Rice, who came on July 14, induced the management, after some little persuasion, to revive for him the old farce of "The Secret," and his "Thomas" was one of the funniest performances ever witnessed on our stage. On the 17th July, James Anderson reappeared after an absence of many years. Few, then looking on him with his splendid figure, his majestic mien, and listening to his melodious voice, would have recognised in him the small boy who some thirty years before had, as the barber's son, lathered their chins in the shop below the Garrick's Head opposite, whilst his father



catered for the customers in the public-house above. He played in a translation of Schiller's "Robbers," "Ingomar," "Clouds and Sunshine," "Othello," and for his benefit in the "Honeymoon." We produced the pantomime of "Blue Beard" on the 15th with Lloyd as "Blue Beard;" Hamblin, "Ibrahim;" Miss Watson, "Selim;" George Hardinge, "Sister Ann;" Miss Rollason, the "Fairy Queen."

There was a short three weeks' season at the Princes' commenced in December, which was very well patronised. Maria Simpson and W. Ellerton (who was stage manager) appeared together in "All that Glitters," "The Little Treasure," "Rough Diamond," "Maid with the Milking Pail," "Game of Romps," and "The Artful Dodger." The main reason for opening the theatre, however, was to produce the pantomime of "Cinderella," in which the "Demon King" was played by Lindsay; the tutor, "Alidora," with an admirable make-up *a la* "Dr. Syntax" by Kendal, the "Prince" by Miss Simpson, the "Queen" by Miss Mace, the "Baron," Fitzroy, the "Sisters," Ellerton and Miss Lavis. On the last night of the season, January 16, Mr. Calvert played "Rube, the Showman," and Powrie "Petruchio," to the "Katherine" of Mrs. Calvert. The pantomime wound up the evening. When the Princes' closed in 1862, the company came back at once to Dunlop Street, and played in the pieces introductory to "Blue Beard." The latter pantomime had run its destined course, and we reached the last night on Saturday, January 31. On the following Monday we were to have opened with Buckstone's drama of the "Dream at

Sea." Never, however, was the Theatre Royal that morrow to see. On the night of January the 31st it was burnt to the ground. By a remarkable coincidence, as in the case of the burning of the "Prince of Wales" and the Cowcaddens Theatre Royal, the fire broke out on the last night of the pantomime. We had been playing as a first piece "Married Life," with the following cast :—

Mrs. Lynx, . . .	Miss Mace.
Mr. Lynx, . . .	Kendal.
Mrs. Younghusband,	Miss Watson.
Mr. Younghusband, . .	W. Baynham.
Mr. Dismal, . . .	Hamblin.
Mrs. Dismal, . . .	Miss Lavis.
Mrs. Coddle, . . .	Mrs. Wallis.
Mr. Coddle, . . .	Fitzroy.
Mrs. Dove, . . .	Miss Eliza Hamilton.
Mr. Dove, . . .	Lloyd.

As the curtain was falling and the *corps* were standing in the usual but now exploded semicircle fashion round the stage, I remarked *sotto voce* to my partner, Miss Watson—"What a strong smell of burning!" She answered—"It smells like burnt wool." The curtain fell. "Blue Beard" was got through very carelessly, the carpenters being, as was customary on such occasions, very drunk. I left after the first piece to read at a soiree in the Merchants Hall, and returned home to my lodgings in West Nile Street at about half-past eleven. About one in the morning a violent ringing at the street door bell awoke me, and, starting up, I heard the cry of "Fire! Dunlop Street Theatre!" The police-

man, not knowing the address of Mrs. Glover, and recollecting that I was the stage manager, had come direct to my house. I dressed as quickly as I could and made my way to the scene, calling on my way down, on Dr. Thomson, one of the late Mr. Glover's trustees. The conflagration was at its height, and its flames were visible for miles around. In the ruddy glare, which lit up the dark night and brought to view the dense crowd below, and the scared faces at every window and on every roof above, were to be seen the features of many a patron and many an actor. Prominent on the stone steps leading to the Garrick's Head were the figures of Mr. R. H. Wyndham and Mr. George Alexander.

How, when, or where the fire broke out no one could tell, but most probably it was caused by some of the old dresses in the costumier's becoming accidentally ignited, although no blame was ever attached to the costumier, who left the wardrobe safe a few minutes after the pantomime had begun.

The conflagration proved a severe loss to all concerned in the theatre, especially to the principal artistes, some of whom had many valuable "properties" and dresses consumed, and for the loss of which they received no compensation. On the following morning the news of the terrible event was conveyed to Mr. Houghton, by a messenger despatched to meet him on his return from London, where he had been making arrangements with stars for the following season. Measures were taken at once for the reopening of the Princes', and within a twelvemonth a handsome theatre was erected on the

site of the former one. But with the destruction of the latter, the days of "old Dunlop Street" were virtually ended.

The roar and shrill whistle of trains, the ponderous railway arch, the traffic, and the rising generation have done their best, or worst, to obliterate the recollections of those days. But to the grey-haired play-goer, their memory is still green, and with a chastened pleasure it will ever conjure up many a pleasant holiday, many a kindly face both on and off the boards—a careless, joyful time. In its long life of more than eighty years the old playhouse had, of course, to answer for many sins of omission and commission; but as having fathered some of the best pieces, domiciled the best actors, and trained the best artistes, old Dunlop Street has carved an eternal niche in the Temple of Fame. We take leave of the old-time scene as we bid a farewell to a dear old friend, and we look back upon it as we gaze upon a childhood simple, bright, and pure—a gentle and tender memory, which neither fashion, taste, nor time can nor will ever efface.





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## ERRATA.

- Page 101, for "the original" read "the original in Edinburgh."  
 Page 118, for "Bryne" read "Byrne."  
 Page 182, for "1885" read "1855."  
 Page 191, for "Messrs. Chapman" read "Misses Chapman."





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